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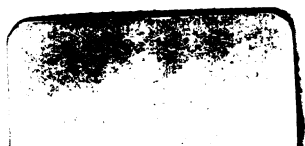
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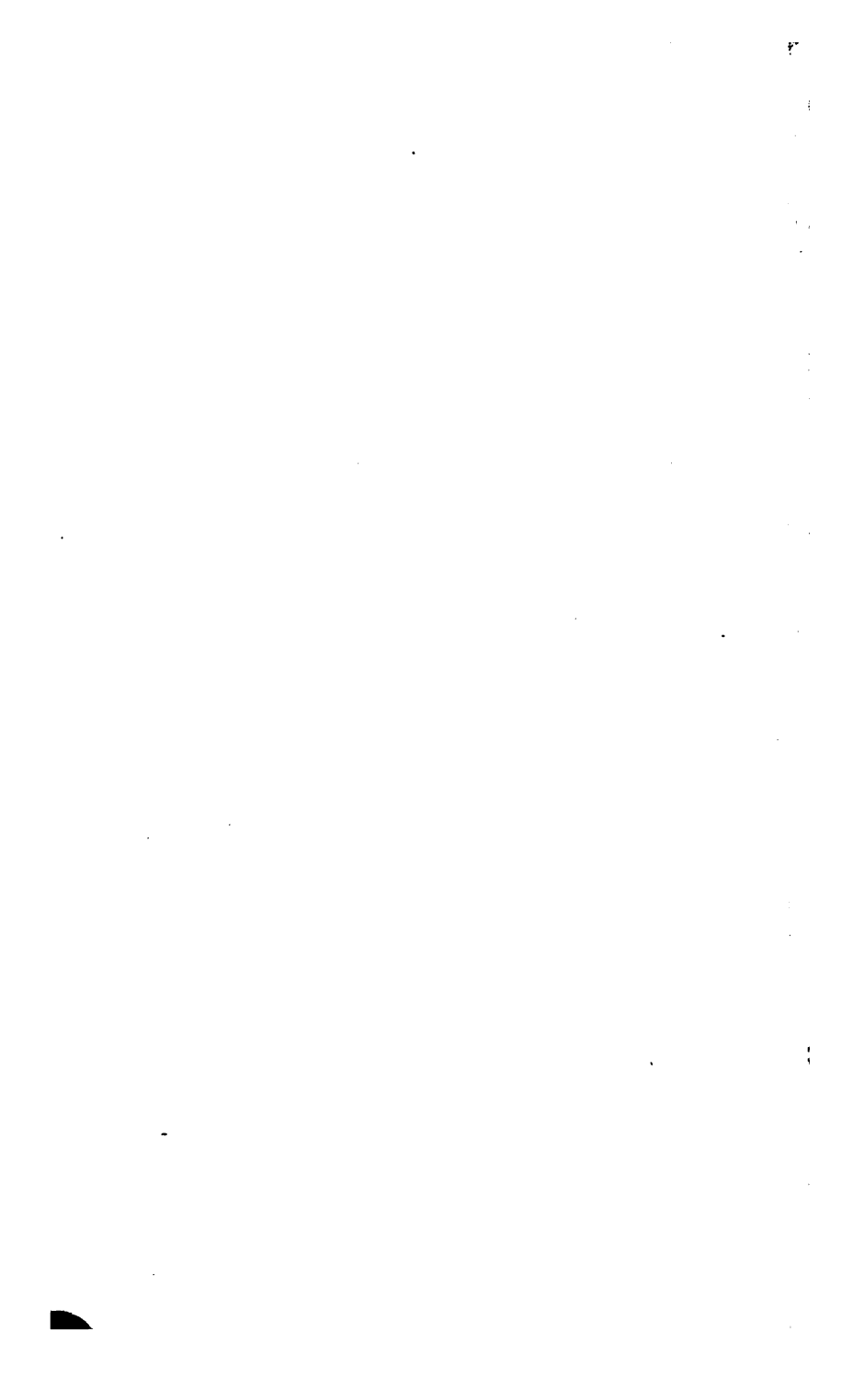
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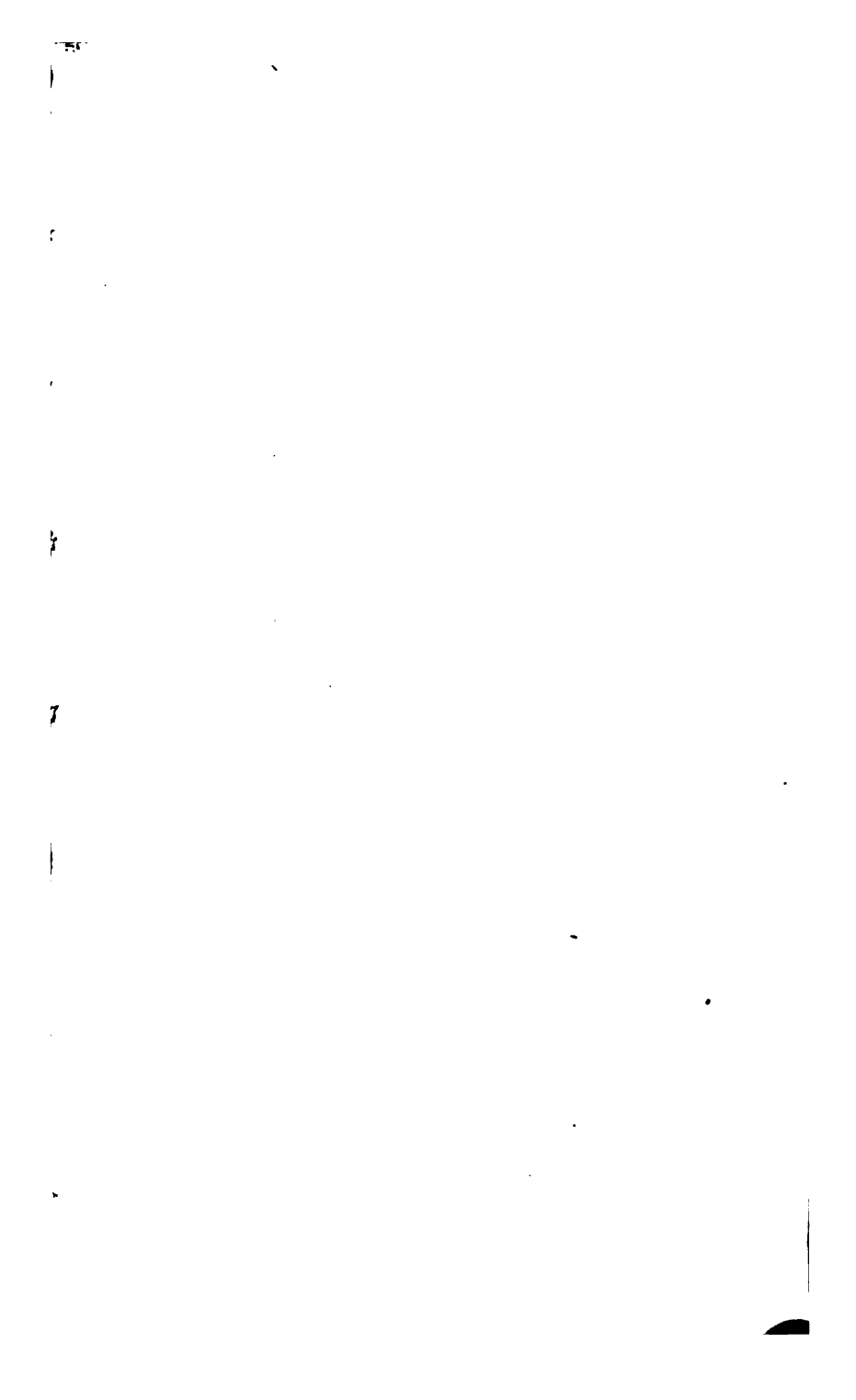
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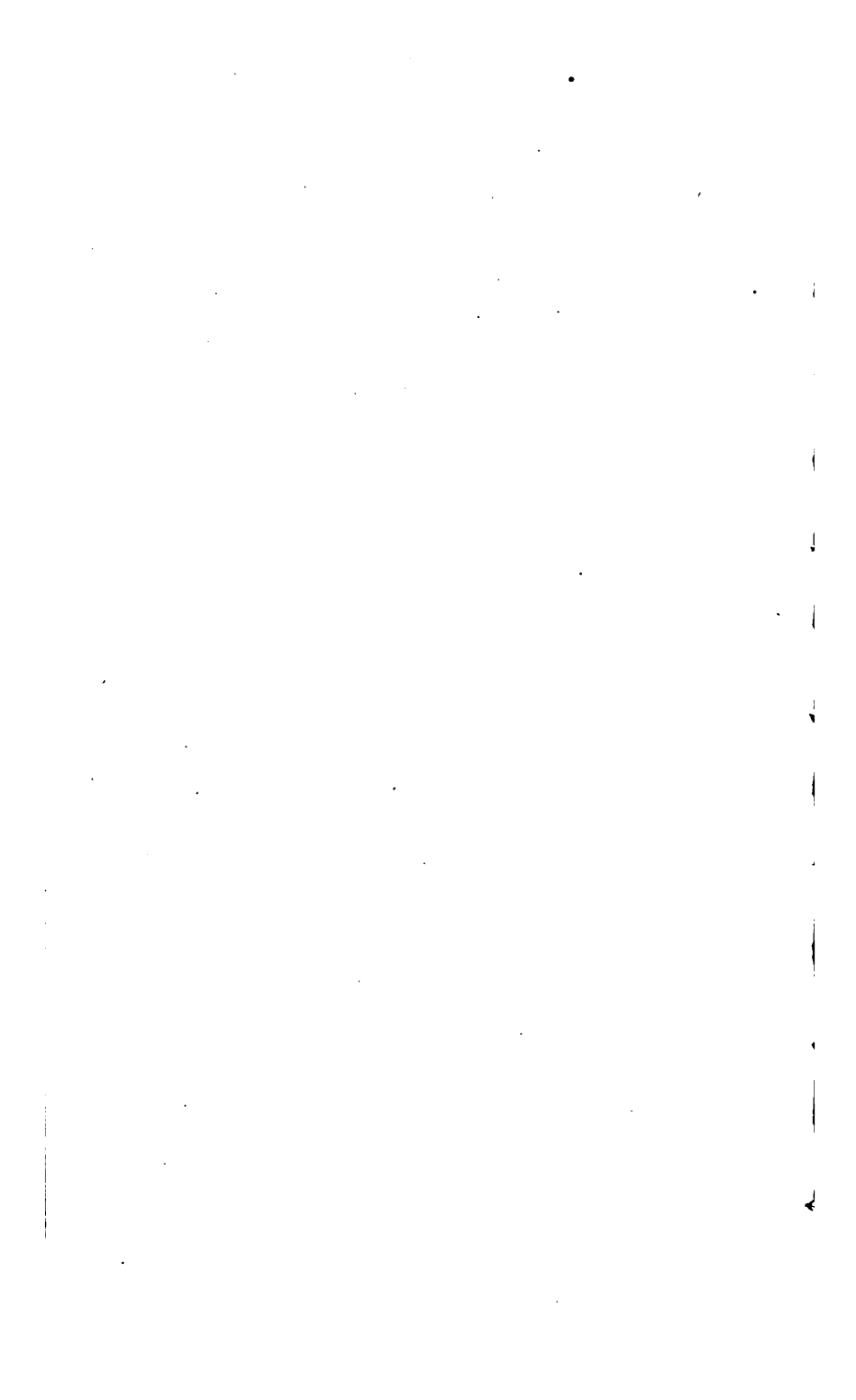
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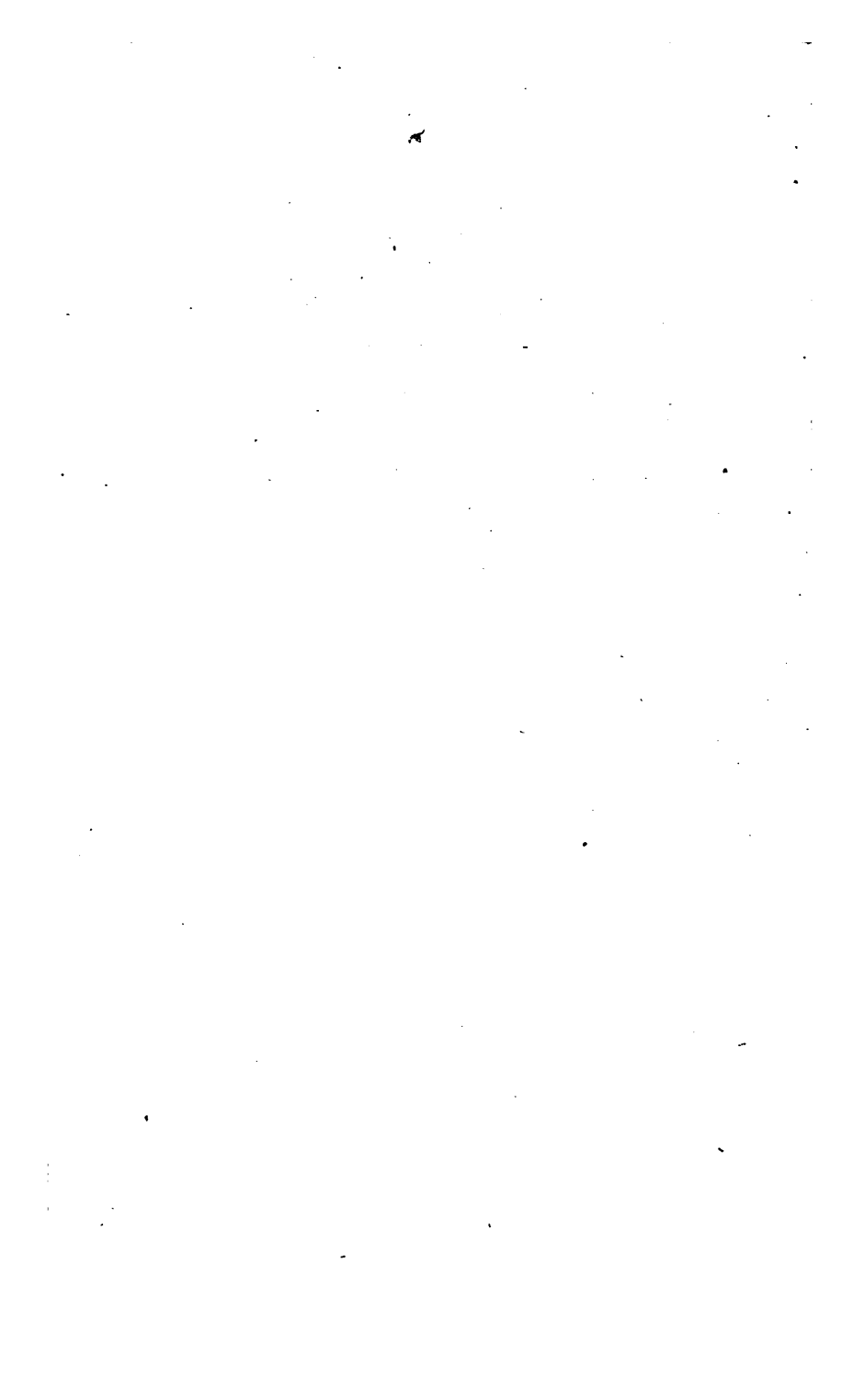
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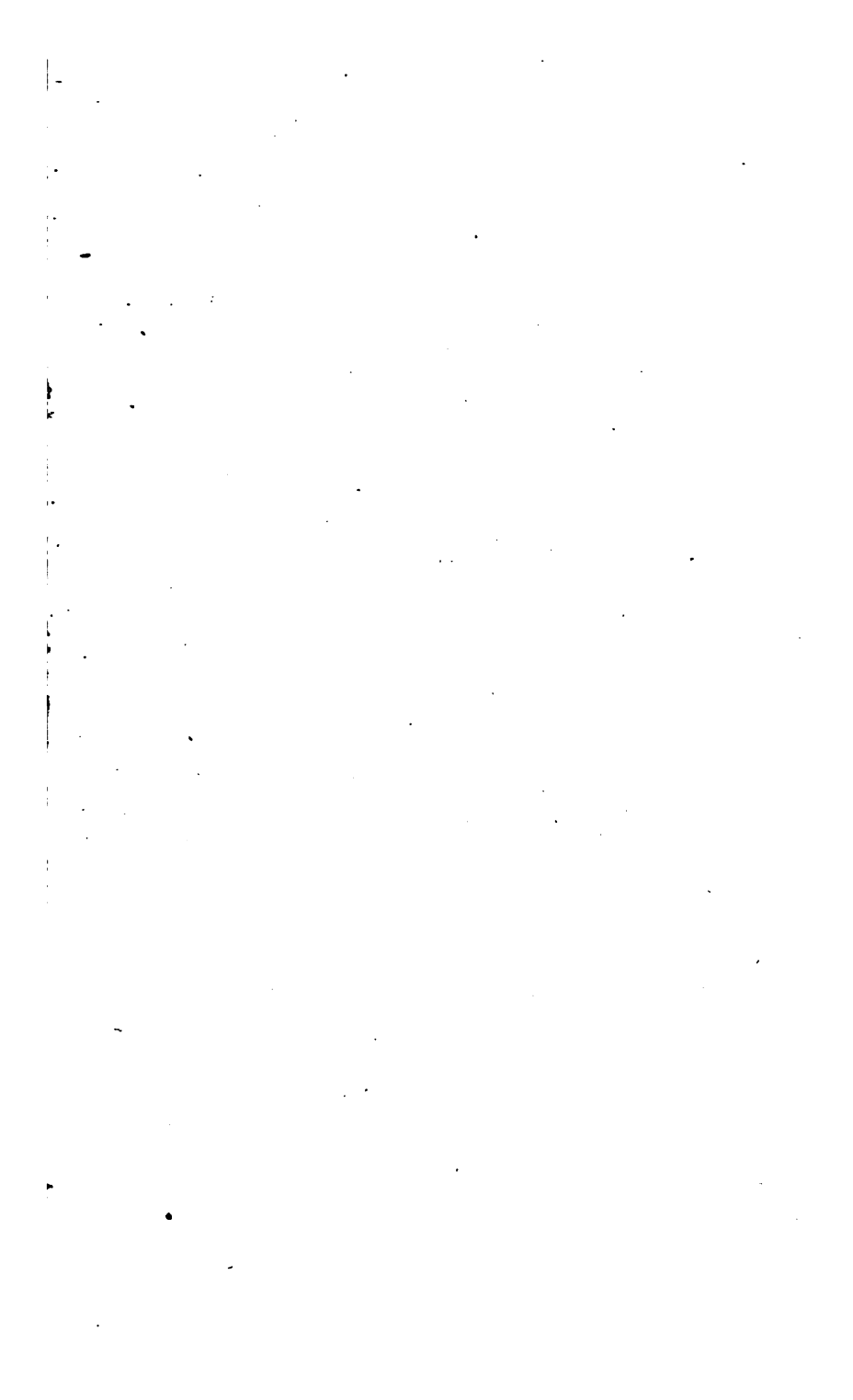
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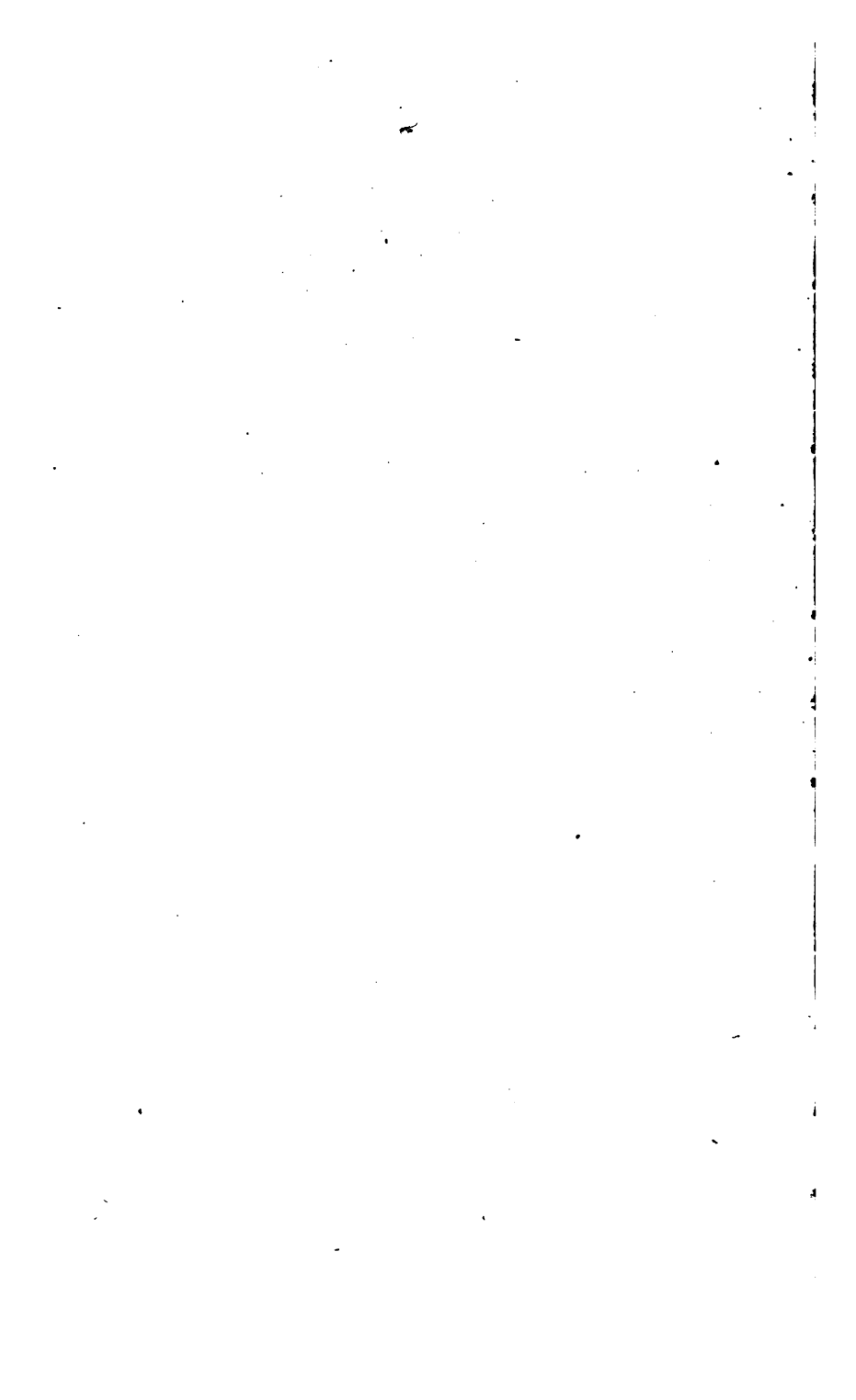
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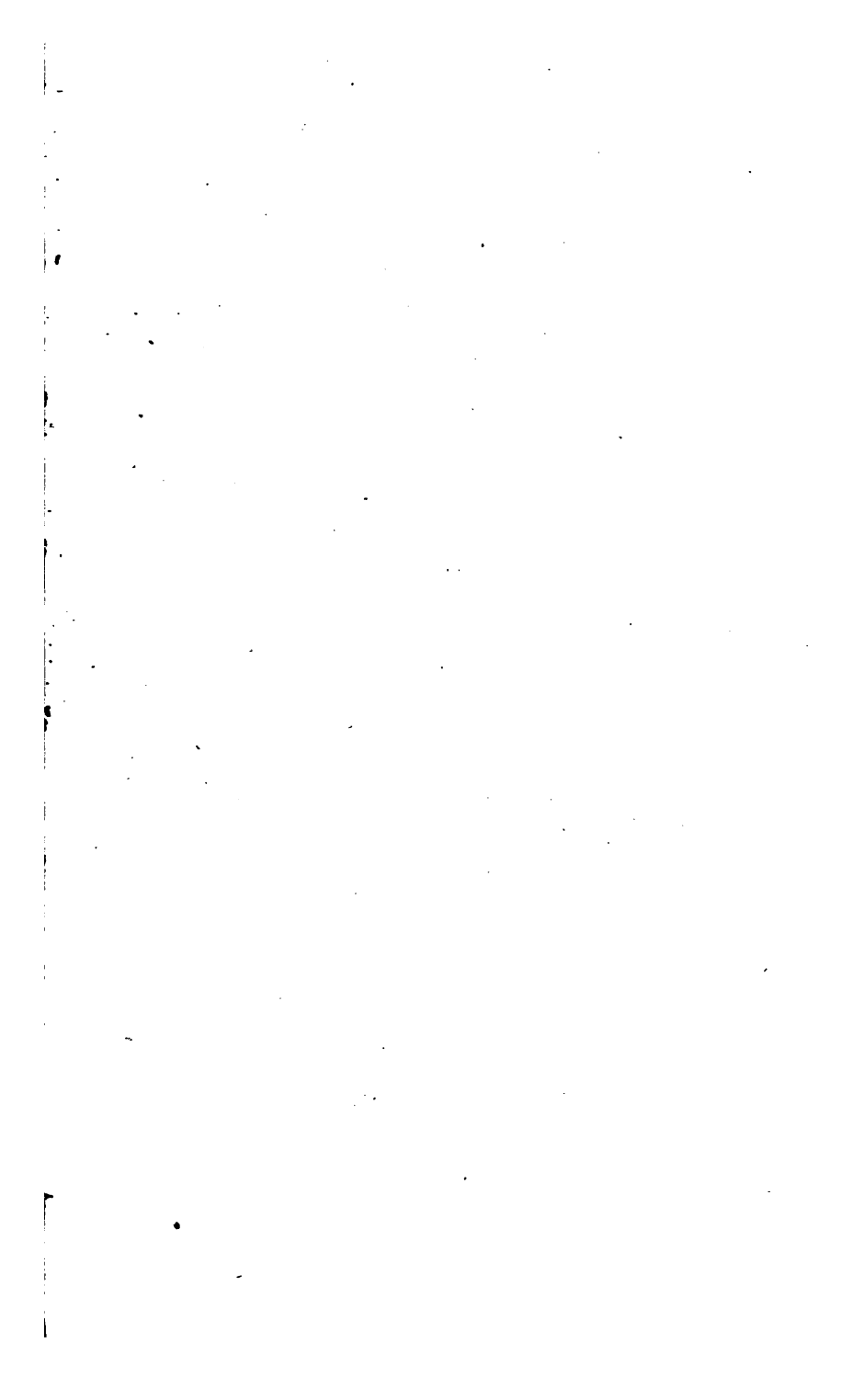
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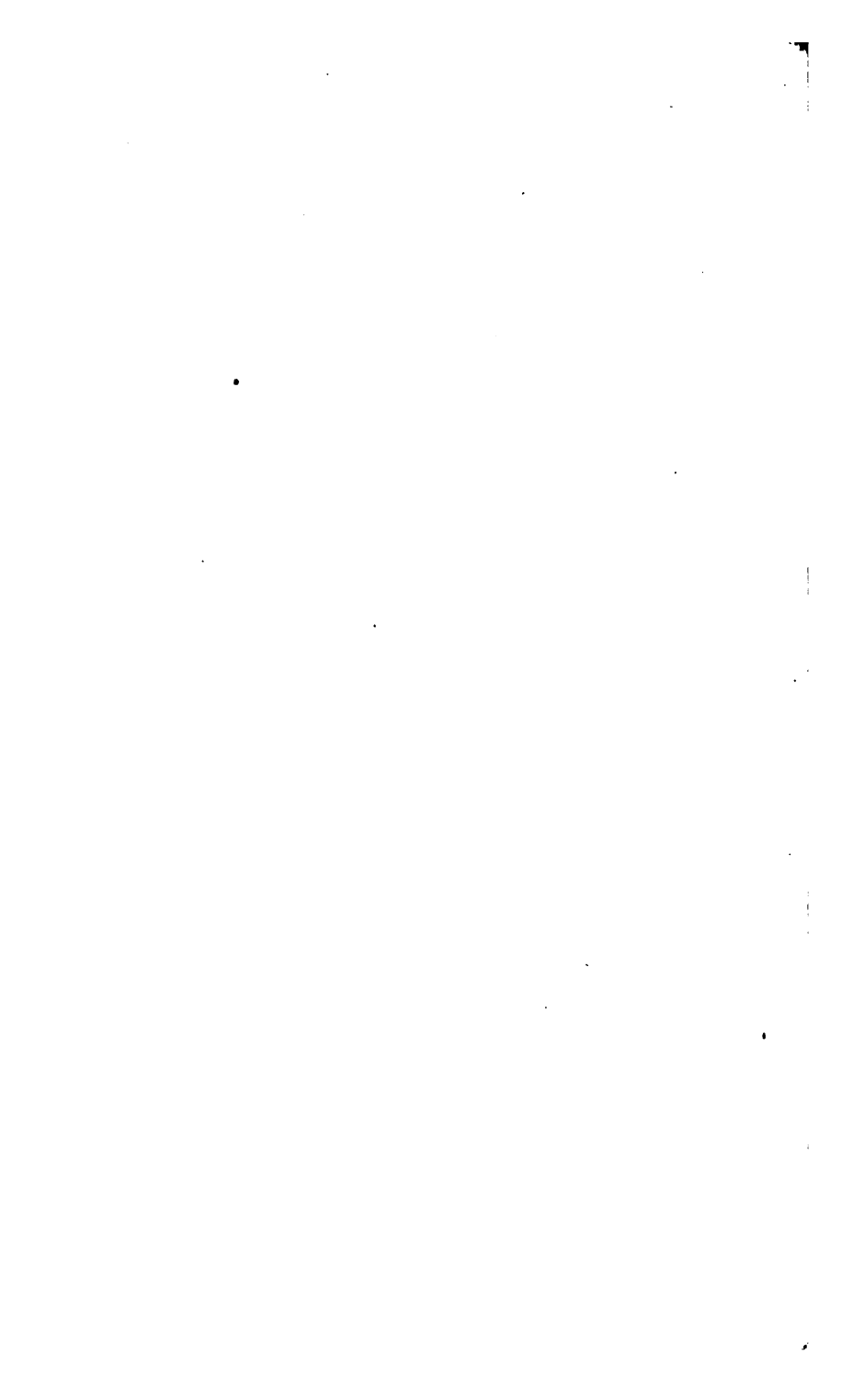
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HILL-SIDE
AND
BORDER SKETCHES.

WITH
LEGENDS OF THE CHEVIOTS
AND THE LAMMERMUIR.

BY W. H. ^{Hamilton}MAXWELL.

AUTHOR OF
"WILD SPORTS OF THE WEST," "STORIES OF WATERLOO."

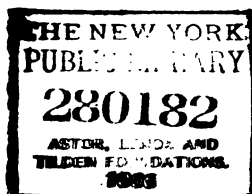
"Lord, who would live 'turmoiled' in the court;
And may enjoy such quiet, ^{as these!}"
— SHAKESPEARE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1847.
My.



LONDON:
Printed by Schulze & Co., 13, Poland Street.

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21804
VWABLL

TO
ARCHIBALD DOUGLAS, ESQ.

OF
GLENFINNART.

MY DEAR SIR,

Many a happy hour in a chequered life I
passed on the romantic shores of Loch Long—and
among the happiest, recal to memory those spent
under the hospitable roof-tree of Glenfinnart. As
a slight memorial that “Auld lang syne” is not
forgotten, accept the inscription of these Volumes,
from

Yours most faithfully

W. H. MAXWELL.

LONDON.
MARCH 30, 1847.

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TO

THE FIRST VOLUME.

UNEXPECTED APPEARANCE OF CLAUDINE DUBRETON.

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HILL-SIDE

AND

BORDER SKETCHES.

INTRODUCTION.

I AM one of those persons who hold the exploded opinion that Great Britain—Ireland, of course, excepted—is the only country in Europe for a gentleman to reside in permanently. With all its faults I love it—and never waste a thought on the eternal encroachments upon English liberty, as “said and sung” over half-and-half by the tailors of Tooley Street. I disbelieve that patriotism and a begging-box can be things co-existent—I have the gift of sleep, *à discrétion*—and, if in my transits to Brighton or Harrowgate, I should be unhappily

cooped up in a railway carriage with a radical, on the first emission of a Jeremiade against military punishment and the abuses of the State, I recline my head comfortably in the corner, and for the remainder of the journey "take mine ease."

I have been through life a wanderer—and inns have been my abiding-places. With West-end hostelrys I am familiar as the house-cat—and had I the vulgar ambition of inscribing my name on glass, there is not a window ten years old in any house of entertainment from the Seine to the Neva, that would not bear my patronymic and Christian appellatives. I have smoked the night away in a Persian caravanserai—been martyred in a Spanish Venta—lived a week in an Irish sheebieene-house—and survived the insolence and extortion of a Yankee Colonel in Kentucky. On every hotel variety—from the palace to the pest-house—I could discourse eloquently; but of all that I have honoured with my presence, give me the little roadside inn to be found nowhere on the surface of the earth, but in "Merrie England" and "the land of cakes."

In such an hostelry, gentle reader, have I

commenced these rambling sketches which I design, and thou shalt confess, to be a right pleasant and instructive portraiture of the adventures which attend, and the scenes that are presented to one, who, like myself, may with more truth than compliment be designated a sporting vagabond. My *locale*, at present, is Northumberland. "Mine inn," overhung by an enormous ash tree, looks upon a mountain-lake with a high broken ridge of heath and rock beyond it. Evening is setting in—all that harmonizes with repose is around me—and Byron's sweet picture of soothing influences seems here to have reality. There is a mastiff chained beneath my window, and when I approached to nib my pen, he welcomed me with a flourish of the tail, and a friendly bark of "deep diapason." The hum of wearied bees—the tinkle of a sheep-bell—the distant low of cattle—all these are heard occasionally—while on the unruffled surface of the tarn* the coot is diving—the trout springing merrily at the passing fly—and, issuing from the reeds which fringe the banks, a wild duck sails proudly out with a

* The name given to mountain loughs in the North of England.

brood of flappers,* which in a few days more will be able to take wing.

I have closed the leaden lattice, and resumed my arm-chair. Did he of Auburn write his "Deserted Village" in this chamber? The floor is unfortunately carpeted, not "sanded," but there stands identically, "The varnished clock that clicked behind the door," and in the corner opposite, a porcelain deformity in the shape of tea-pot, with cup and saucers in strict conformity, of no use whatsoever, and therefore "wisely kept for shew."

The mantel-piece is crowded with spar and pebbles collected among the neighbouring hills—preserved hawks and owls ornament the walls—and while Flora Mac Donald looks me full in the face, I am flanked right and left by 'The Prodigal Son' and 'The Young Pretender.'

My dormitory is inside my chamber of state. All appertaining to it—sheets, counterpane, and curtains, snow-white as when they left the bleaching-field. A creeper, bearing berries of gorgeous scarlet, intermingled with a blue clematis, festoons the casement, which looks

* The sporting title for young wild ducks, before their wing-feathers are fully grown,

upon a little flower-garden and a row of beehives. Here, everything but murder might sleep sweetly—and Saul himself find “soft repose” without a harp accompaniment.

There is a gentle tap at the door—and the sweetest girl in Westmoreland comes in to lay the supper cloth. Susan is just eighteen, exchanging girlish prettiness for beautiful maturity. “I wish I were as I have been,” when at Waterloo I crossed swords with the Imperial Guard, and, by everything matrimonial, I would—

“Rein up, Colonel!” methinks I hear a snappish admirer of mine remark. “The event you alluded to occurred ‘when George the Third was King.’ ’Tis, if my computation be correct, some thirty-one years ago—and if you tilted with a French cuirassier, why, you could not exactly have been a chicken at the time. What the devil business have elderly gentlemen, with bald heads and ‘spectacles on nose,’ to think, speak, or write of youth and beauty? ‘Setting your knighthood aside,’ as Dame Quickly says to a brother of your order—fat Sir John—‘I write you down a—’”

“I pray you, Mr. Reader, for personal con-

siderations, withhold the intended epithet. I confess that my *cranium* is beyond the range of Macassar—that I am extensively crow-footed—a little exuberant where the nether garments and the vest unite; and I also freely admit that the hirsute honours on my lip are the true *vieille moustache*, and equally removed from being re-established by dye or unguent. But I can still bag a couple of snipes out of three; and when my hand is steady after dinner, remove the bonnet from the knave of spades, four shots out of seven, at twelve paces—tolerably good pistol-practice for a quintigenarian you will admit. And why should I not admire in age, her whom in youth I worshipped? Can I forget that, when sun-struck on the Peninsula, as consciousness returned, I saw the jet black eye that watched my fevered slumbers brighten, as she squeezed the orange into my parched lips?—Shall I not remember, when wounded and a prisoner, that on the night before the convoy was to march, which was to bear me to captivity in France—God knows how lasting!—the keeper's wife whispered that she could not lock the side door, and expressed a hope that I would not take advantage of her husband's absence,

and make my way to an outlying picket of our own, posted in a place she pointed out, and scarcely a mile beyond the cork wood? Oh no! While life exists I will own the superiority of nature's masterpiece; and when the last rou comes, may the hand of innocence and beauty smooth the pillow of him who, in the sweet form that hangs over him, will fancy he has an angelic assurance that another and a better existence is about to open.

CHAPTER I.

MEN have different gifts, and to some, Dame Nature is more bountiful than to others. That I was originally designed by that beneficent lady for a traveller, is a truth indisputable ; and whether by sea or land it mattereth not, my qualities for locomotion are so extensive. I have a small but ready appetite, can drink as becometh a Christian man, sleep *ad libitum*, “ by day, or night, or any light ;” and in philosophy I am an optimist. If benighted on the mountain side, obliged to “ lie with the larks,” and adopt a heathy pillow, at daybreak, I return thanks to the prophet for prompting the wise resolution of bivouacking in proper time, thereby escaping a practical lesson in the art of sinking in some neighbouring morass, or broken bones over the adjacent gully. At sea, if a spar be sprung, or the engine go amiss, I remain as

much at ease as Diogenes at Sinope, leaving the reparation of damages to those most concerned in the same, and calling to memory the judicious remark of my excellent countryman, when informed that the vessel was sinking "Well, blessed be God! I am only a passenger."

I have often thought had the 'Wandering Jew' been a gentleman of my disposition, he would not have had a bad life of it after all. "From Captain Noah down to Captain Cook," of ancient and modern travellers, this gentleman is, by universal consent, admitted to be the most celebrated; and touching "his life and conversation"—as old biographers express it—every account agrees that this child of promise, wherever he turned his footsteps, kept good company and paid his way like a brick. Now, if fashionable society, and a purse sufficiently enduring to stand the drainage of a West-end hotel, could make a tourist comfortable, the perennial migrations of this Israelite should have been felicitous as a week out of town after hymeneals by consent, or the return of a brace of fugitives from "fair Tweed-side," with "a cursed specimen of crabbed penmanship" in their pocket, executed at Lamberton Bar by a reverend

gentleman the worse for liquor, declaring the levanters man and wife, and setting guardians and parents at defiance.

When in a hurry—and sometimes, idler that I am, I labour under the delusion that I have business which calls for expedition—I prefer the railroad—but with ordinary circumstances to influence my outgoings, give me such means of locomotion as the Leith and Clyde steamers afford the wanderer. To him who is both snob-proof and sea-hardy, these vessels are luxurious. The latter I am—the former I am not. I fancy that the art of war, like the art of poetry, renders men irritable; and unhappily for myself, I cannot take in vulgar puppyism at any price. In voyaging either to the city of shuttles, yclept Glasgow, or that remnant of royalty—and what an interesting one Auld Reekie is!—vulgarity assails you in every shape; but, blessed be Allah! I have an unprepossessing countenance and most repulsive manners; up goes my battle-flag when I cross the gang-board that connects the vessel with the pier; with one broad stare I have annihilated a cockney who contemplated familiarity; and at table, when I choose to be disagreeable, the most audacious

scoundrel who ever concocted a bubble rail line, would not venture to ask me to pass the salt.

And yet he who voyageth by long steam will rarely find the transit barren—and out of the herd on board, an adept like myself well acquainted with the species, will seldom fail in picking from the “*profanum vulgus*” a gentleman, or, what will suit his purpose quite as well, some personage of no pretension and much intelligence, as companionable to the full, and unpresuming as if he had been better born.

In Leith and Glasgow steamers, “an ye be a man—” which in its nautical acceptation meaneth a person who can eat, drink, and sleep at discretion—and the weather be moderate, you can command, and on very reasonable terms, every creature comfort procurable in a well-appointed hotel. Even in a gale these splendid ships would be very tolerable, if those who are not sea-hardy would have the decency to ensconce themselves and their sufferings in their berths. I was once cured of a fit of love contracted on the pier of Howth, by a fit of sickness perpetrated before we reached Holyhead; and assuredly, if woman cannot ensure deep sympathy from man, what chance of pity has a coarse he-fellow

sprawling on a sofa, and instead of concealing his stomachic infirmities, disgusting, even unto loathing, those who would have otherwise escaped the visitation. Any of these offending Jonahs are utterly beyond the pale of pardon ; and I verily believe, I would aid and assist in committing the man and his afflictions to the deep.

If a person were anxious to study human character, the best book he can resort to will be opened to him in a steamer. I have the talent for detecting the peculiarities of my kind, and between "the egg and the apple—" which rendered into Scotch, means cock-a-leeky and the cheese—I can analyse a dinner table pretty accurately.

It is marvellous what varieties in human character will occasionally be found encircling the same board, and how easily their classification can be determined, when the steward strikes upon "the tocsin of the soul—the dinner-bell." The gentleman quietly takes his seat, predetermined to receive thankfully whatever has been provided for him. The ex-militaire, before he deposits his person on the camp-stool, sweeps the cloth over to ascertain whether fork and spoon are correctly paraded—the contracted eye, before which for a quarter of a century mess-

waiters have quailed, "dreading the deep damnation of his Bah!" concentrating its optic powers to detect, if it be possible, a delinquency. The bagman, or in more modern parlance, "the traveller," cares not a brass button for tabular arrangements, his care being confined to a rapid investigation of the viands, accompanied by a mental calculation touching the respective dishes from which the best return for two shillings will be obtained. Of snobs—and what a comprehensive addition to our language that expressive word makes! you may naturally calculate on an extensive assortment, urban and rustic. In rural delinquencies, they being chiefly confined to dress, you feel disposed to pity and pardon the offender; but your city snob being gifted with detestable presumption, you find yourself irresistibly impelled to offer him sixpence a day for life to keep out of your sight for ever.

I have suffered from such persons as the latter, until I attained a mental temperament that I became dangerous to approach. I have undergone the severest visitations, writhed under the afflicting vulgarity of "the folks and bodies" who infest the Clyde, and the more intolerable audacity of those cockney scoundrels who take

liberties with the vowels, consider Margate fashionable, and labour under a delusion, that the fry they get at Blackwall are fish in actual reality. Heaven knows! these afflictions are enough to mortify the flesh sufficiently; and, as I foolishly imagined, they would be booked in the per-contra side against my sins, and save me from undergoing an annealing process in purgatory when this mortal coil had been shuffled off. But I had yet to learn that a still heavier visitation was in store; and that, through the malignant influence of evil planets, it was ordained that I should undergo the pains and penalties attendant on a voyage in the Hull steamer.

My destination was Berwick-upon-Tweed—the best *point d'appui* in Britain for an angler—and no mistake. The day of sailing of the steamer thither bound, was duly announced; and I, having put my house in order, like a prudent tourist migrated eastward over-night, to be within pistol-shot of my packet in the morning. I reached my destination—and the leathern conveniency which “carried Cæsar and his saddle-bags,” pulled up at an hotel opposite the docks.

"Where's yer honour goin'?" inquired a red-headed rascal, who, had he held the gold stick in the Court of Timbuctoo, I should have identified at sight as a loving countryman.

"To Berwick," was the reply.

"Ah! then," responded red-head, "yer honour's a trifle of time after the ship, for she sailed at eight o'clock this mornin'."

"Impossible! The hour of sailing is advertised for to-morrow in 'The Times.'"

"Feaks! and that same's likely enough," and the scoundrel scratched his head. "But you see they're so very punctual, that they sail the day before they say they will, to prevent disappointment, I suppose."

"Is that what you call punctuality?" I exclaimed, in a towering passion. "My malison on you and punctuality both. What the devil are you doing with my luggage?"

"What am I doin'? Jist puttin' ye up for the night, where ye'll sleep snug and comfortable."

"And why should I sleep here, you vagabond?"

"Arrah! how asy it is to know a gentleman from the ould country, by the plisant way they talk to one! Feaks! and I'll tell ye why ye'll

sleep here. Ar'n't ye opposite the Hull packet that sails to-morrow?"

"And what is the Hull packet to me?" I responded.

"Why, jist because I know from the guns and fishin'-rods, that yer only goin' on the *ran-tan*; and is it anything to the like of you, whether ye head to Hull or Berwick?"

And, before I could exert free agency or enter a protest, the villain had every article appertaining to me abstracted from the cab, and regularly shouldered up-stairs by the porters.

"Hav'n't I, in less than no time, made yer honour snug for the night?" exclaimed the "hereditary bondsman," grinning with evident satisfaction at his own address, and holding out his hand for the consideration which he calculated was to follow. He saw a shilling in my hand; and, as if the monetary transfer had been already legally effected, he lauded me for my liberality.

"It's asy knowin' the raal gentleman," said red-head. "Arrah! bad luck to me! though maybe, you wouldn't believe it, but there's divils wid dacent coats upon them, that would put one off with a tanner, or a fourpenny—may Crom-

well's heavy curse attend the inventors of the last! From the moment I twigged yer honor, says I quietly to myself, 'Stick to him, Peter Clancy, like wax, for he wouldn't condescend to reach an obligin' lad of your kind anything below a bob.' "

Now, although part of Peter Clancy's remarks were conveyed in terms with which I was not familiar, I comprehended that gentility consisted in giving shillings, and that sixpence was a vulgar coin.

"Mr. Clancy, will you permit me, before we part, to ask you a simple question?"

"Arrah! to be sure I will," returned red-head. "But, ye didn't mane we were to part. Troth! it's myself that would scorn to lave a respectable elderly gentleman like yerself, friendless and unpurTECTED in the streets of London. I'll see your property safe aboard the boat, and take better care of ye than many a bad step-father would in the mornin'."

"Mr. Clancy," I replied, "will you favour me with the full particulars of the murder, which procured for the British capital the honour of your residence?"

"Upon my sowl!" returned my loving coun-

tryman, "it is not for committin' murder I am here. But, if yer honour must know the cause—why, it's jist for not committin' matrimony."

"Explain yourself, you scoundrel!"

"Well, when a man's spoken civilly to, he can refuse nothing,—and, feaks! I'll out with the whole to ye," returned this specimen of the finest peasantry upon earth (*authoritate*, Daniel.) "I was goin' fair and asy along the road, about a month ago, when, from a *boreyeen*,* who falls upon me like a soot-droop at the corner of the hedge, but Father Denis Grady. 'Peter!' says he, drawin' up.—'Arrah! plase yer rev'rence,' says I, 'but yer lookin' fresh and well,—the Lord be praised for the same!'—'Peter!' said the priest, eyeing me mighty quare, 'I'm of opinion there's a rod in pickle for ye. *Tiggum?*'† and he laid his finger on his nose.—'Arrah! what have I done, yer rev'rence?' says I.—'Peter,' says he, 'where were ye last Tuesday night?'—'Ah! the divil a one of me had anything to say to the scrimmage that evening, good or bad,' says I.—'Who's talkin' about scrimmages?' says the priest. 'Peter, ye'r a

* A horse-path across a bog.

† Do you understand me?

patent rascal, and a most accomplished malefactor, I'm afraid. What brought ye across the bog wid Honor Donovan ?"—'To convoy her from the dance, plase yer rev'rence, as ye know she's a neighbour's child.'—'Peter,' says he, 'ye'll be hanged, as sure as the divil's in Galway.'—'Oh ! may the Lord forbid !' says I.—'Troth ! ye may make yer mind asy on it,' says he ; 'ye'r certain to spoil a market. But, to cut a long story short, af ye don't make Biddy Donovan an honest woman betune this and Garlick Sunday, and that's the Sunday after nixt—be this book,' and he kissed the handle of his whip, 'I'll give ye such a blast from the altar, that after it yer own dog wouldn't keep ye company.'—'Oh ! murder ! murder !' says I. 'Doesn't yer rev'rence know well that Judy was off for a week with a recruitin'-party ?'—'Why, ye hard-hearted Samaritan,' says he, 'would you venture to give back an answer to your clargy ? Be off ! an' if ye don't behave dacent to the little girl, I'll make a world's wonder of ye !'—'Wasn't I in a beautiful quandary ? Divil a choice left but to marry a wife without a rag of character, or be cursed on Garlick Sunday. 'What's to be done,' says I to myself. 'Divil

a thing but cut your stick, Peter Clancy,' says I, answerin' my own question. Feaks! accordingly, I brushes next morning at daylight; and, after a week on the treadmill at Liverpool for an assault, I reached London in good health, and without a *scultogne* in my pocket. Well, I goes for news to the Seven Dials, and, sure enough, Bridget Lanigan had a letter from her brother the day before. It was all over wid me. Father Denis, when he heard I had bolted, put the candles out on me, and my sister into convulsions—and here I am, yer honour, durin' life—for the divil a toe I dar turn to the old country, ye know."

"It is quite certain," I replied, "that London has got a valuable and a permanent addition to her population. Be off!" and flinging another shilling to the gay deceiver who had drawn down upon himself the ire of mother church, he vanished like a sharp-shooter, and I proceeded to my apartments for the night.

By times next morning I was a foot; and on descending the stairs I found Mr. Clancy in attendance. We proceeded to London Bridge—the false one, in addition to my personal

property, having a bundle secured in a pocket-handkerchief on the truck, and an oak saplin under his arm. My luggage was committed to the hold; my guns and fishing-rods carried to the cabin; the porter fully satisfied; and Mr. Clancy accommodated with half-a-crown—in return for which the ex-communicated rascal had the impudence to favour me with his blessing.

I hate greetings in the market-place; and cockney *adieux* I carefully eschew. The bell sounded its three alarums; and, to avoid the bustle attendant on departure, I ensconced myself below. Through the cabin-skylight, I heard “the monarch of her peopled deck,” a personage whose countenance bore “tokens true” of heavy wet and heavy weather, order the mooring-ropes to be hauled aboard. A preparatory grunt was given from the engine-room; the wheels revolved slowly. “Remember me affectionately to my Aunt Deborah,” from the gangway, was returned by “Give my love to Cousin Francis” from the shore. “Turn ahead!” screamed the attendant imp, who, like the repeating-frigate of a fleet, gave language to the waved hand of the commander on the paddle-box—and off we went.

A cursory glance at the company on deck had been unfavourable ; and, consequently, during the voyage, I had secretly determined to preserve an isolated dignity ; and, when breakfast was announced, and, one after another, my fellow-passengers descended the companion-ladder, a personal inspection confirmed my previous resolution.

The oldest "*refugium peccatorum*" I believe, on record, was the Cave of Abdullum, where all in danger and in debt resorted, as fashionable levanters repair in the present day to Boulogne. The Hull steamer on this morning, I fancy, would have set the *table d'hôte* of the Hôtel du Nord at defiance ; and even the cavern itself could put forward no pretence to rival "The Rapid." A bubble railroad had been kicked out of committee the preceding day—and all concerned in the same—to wit, the flats and sharps—the victimized and the victimizers—were returning to the North,—all wiser men, and the larger proportion much sadder ones than when they visited the great metropolis.

Never did a more dolorous company congregate round a breakfast-table. The scrip-holders were demolished ; the director-general had

already been favoured with six-and-forty notices of action ; half-a-dozen proprietors of theodolites and iron chains looked upon them with despairing eyes, and, like Othello, recollected that in surveying as in war, it is not pleasant for a gentleman to ascertain that "his occupation's gone." One thing struck me as remarkable,—however infelicitous their Stag Alley operations had proved, the digestive powers of the company were unimpaired by these monetary misfortunes, for such a collection of human cormorants I never before consorted with ; and I came to the conclusion that, as necessity sharpens invention, scrip-holding improves the appetite.

Even with a polished gambler I never could encourage intimacy ; and lower black-legs are not endurable at all. I hurried over breakfast—mounted the cabin ladder,—and found on deck two persons, with whom I subsequently formed an acquaintance. Never were the circumstances which excited interest for strangers more dissimilar.

One was a ruined dupe ; the other a sweet and artless girl of nineteen. Everything about the fair one was calculated to enlist my sympathy. She was young, pretty, innocent, alone,

and unprotected—in a foreign land, and unable to speak one syllable of its language.

The delight she evinced when she found I could converse with her in French, was probably enhanced by finding that in her new protector, she had a man whose years warranted her to look fearlessly to him as a father. Without the least hesitation, she accepted my tender of attention; and when she found that my profession had been that of arms—that I held a similar rank to her late father, Colonel St. Aubyn—that we had opposed each other in the same fields—and expended the best years of mutual life in honourable conflict on the Peninsula,—I verily believe that, without a particle of distrust, she would have accompanied me to Kamschatka, had our destinations thither pointed.

I spread a military cloak on one of the side-benches, and we sat down to enjoy a pleasant sea-breeze, and observe the hundred passing vessels which each succeeding tide hurries from all the corners of the earth, to bring fresh additions to the enormous wealth of the mighty capital of Britain. Before an hour passed, Ninette—as my sweet *protégée* was named—with all the confidence of youth, spoke to me

unreservedly as if we had been the acquaintances of years ; while, encouraged by the undisguised intimacy her manner seemed to court, I expressed surprise that one so young, so pretty, and so helpless, had ventured into a stranger land, without some female friend to bear her company, or a male protector, like myself.

She smiled.

"I would freely, my dear friend, tell you the causes of this apparent impropriety ; but you would laugh at me—" and she looked archly in my face.

"And why should I, pretty one ! laugh at—"

She playfully interrupted the sentence, and added,

"What all but those concerned think ridiculous—a love story !"

"And fancy you, my sweet friend," I responded warmly, "that because Dan Cupid and I parted company before you saw the light, that my heart is so gnarled by time, and my feelings so deadened, that I cannot sympathize with youthful affections ?"

"Ah, then, *mon colonel*, I will tax your patience," she replied, laughing. "No matter ; the safest *confidant* the soldier's orphan could

repose in, is in him who possibly crossed sabres with her father on the battle-field. In the *vieille moustache*," and she touched my grizzled lip, "St. Aubyn's child has nought to dread."

"And were it coal-black, as it once was," I passionately rejoined, "she might equally place reliance in his faith. He who wears the soldier's livery, and could imagine aught against thee, Ninette, but what was generous and kind, may heart fail him in his hour of trial, and everything brave and noble recoil from him as a recreant."

She took my hand—pressed it in her's—and, while tears and smiles contended for the mastery, Ninette St. Aubyn communicated the simple story of a young life.

Could I but narrate the tale in her own *naïve* and artless language, while by turns, a smile brightened the countenance radiant with expression, or a tear stole down her cheek, as some unhappy passage in her varying fortunes was recalled to memory—the reader would admit that the coldest listener could not refuse his sympathy to so fair and so interesting a *raconteuse*.

CHAPTER II.

NINETTE ST. AUBYN.

THE amount of human suffering which was produced by the French Revolution, it would be impossible even to conjecture—but great as the evil and misery that resulted might have been, this terrible convulsion produced in time an improved order of new things and new men. Rotten institutions were demolished; and the wretched noblesse, with their favourites and dependents, who had sprang into mischievous elevation by court intrigue, gave way to humbler-born and better citizens. The public departments were purified—a crowd of worthless *attachés*, who had evaded the guillotine, were driven into exile—a profligate priesthood totally suppressed—and, profiting by the removal of these nuisances, which so long had impoverished

and disgraced a land afflicted by corrupt government, national prosperity revived—while, *pari passu*, arts and sciences advanced. The reign of terror, as the thunder-storm removes the noxious influences of an unhealthy atmosphere by a fearful but efficient action, renovated a demoralized people; and, as a long-neglected malady can only be remedied by desperate means, France could not have attained the mighty position she had lost, and which she afterwards recovered, excepting by sweeping root and branch away, a bad monarchy, a worse aristocracy, and a still more abominable priesthood.

Many were the changes which the existing order of things were fated to sustain at this eventful period—but the most extraordinary of the whole, was the total revolution which, in all matters connected with it, the art of war underwent. Military systems, based on erroneous principles, but to which continental commanders adhered with a devotion that can now be regarded only as ridiculous, were gradually absorbed in the scientific simplicity which rendered the armies of the Republic invincible. The pernicious principle which opened only to the high-born a chance of military preferment, was

exploded. To the reach of the humblest in the social scale, fame, and honour, and distinction were extended—and, consequently, those magnificent soldiers, who made France the mistress of the continent, and annihilated the stupid pedantry of the imbecile old men to whom armies had been hitherto entrusted, won and maintained that glorious celebrity, which, while history lasts, will attach itself to the Generals of Napoleon.

When the reign of terror was devastating France, and the high-born and the humblest were indiscriminately sacrificed to the fury of the times, in a remote valley in the lower range of the Pyrenees, two families were residing. One, was that of a small proprietor called St. Aubyn—the other, belonged to a person who had held a situation under the late government, named Harrispe. St. Aubyn was by descent a gentleman, and in rank superior to his neighbour; but Harrispe, who had risen from obscurity, was the wealthier. Both were fathers, and each the parent of an only child.

When the revolution broke out, Pierre St. Aubyn was nineteen—a bold and handsome mountaineer; while Lucille Harrispe, two years

younger, was unquestionably the finest girl in the department. Circumstances appeared to have designed them for each other—they loved, or thought they loved—and their parents sanctioned a union, which was fixed for the approaching birthday of the bride elect.

While the centre of the kingdom was fearfully convulsed, and blood flowed in torrents in the capital, the remote situation of the valley of San Roque, as yet had screened it from the fury of the times. The distant muttering of the thunder-cloud was heard—and the wild reports which reached the mountains, of scenes of atrocity transacting elsewhere, were received distrustfully by the Basque peasants as being too horrible for belief—while from their isolated locality, the inhabitants of San Roque expected they would escape the notice, and thus evade the reckless vengeance with which the republicans visited alike the guilty and the innocent. That hope was vain; for no spot in France was so remote, but human blood-hounds scented out the victim. Agents arrived from Paris; they brought plenary power from the Directory to slaughter all suspected as they pleased—and, from having held an appointment under the

ancient *régime*, in the proscribed list the name of Harrispe stood prominently. Nothing but instant flight could have saved him from destruction—and his friend, St. Aubyn, reckless of personal considerations, enabled him to leave the kingdom with his wife and daughter, and also assisted him in carrying off the larger portion of his property. Alas! the secret speedily transpired that the escape of one so obnoxious as Harrispe had been effected by the agency of St. Aubyn—and his own death was not considered a sufficient atonement for the crime of saving a devoted man. The family of the offender were included in the fatal list. St. Aubyn and his innocent wife were guillotined—and Pierre alone, from his intimate acquaintance with the passes of the mountains, escaped the knife, and crossed the Spanish frontier.

Until they were secure from the reach of their enemies, the younger St. Aubyn had accompanied the fugitives, and never left them while a chance of their being overtaken existed. Deep were the expressions of eternal gratitude from the parents; but more ardent the protestations of eternal love reiterated by the beautiful Lucille, as she hung upon the bosom ,

of young Pierre, and swore eternal fidelity. Their union was to take place in England—whither St. Aubyn was to follow the refugees as soon as circumstances should permit.

Months passed. No letter from the fugitives reached their deliverer save one, and that told him that the family of Harrispe were safe in the British capital. Pierre was a homeless man—one without kindred or country—his parents murdered—his property confiscated—his life proscribed—and in a strange land, without money or a friend, he felt bitterly this reverse of fortune. But hope pointed in his darkest hour to that land of freedom, where love and Lucille would yet repay all that he had suffered and sustained; until at last, through the generous sympathy of an English Captain, he obtained a passage, and found himself in the streets of London in safety, and without a sixpence.

By an inquiry at the Alien Office, he found out the residence of the emigrants, and thither he hurried. In Harrispe, he would find a father in place of him whom he had lost—in Lucille, the sublimated happiness which the smiles of beauty confer on man, after he has endured the double

test of absence and adversity. Alas! poor youth! little did he anticipate the intelligence and the reception that awaited him. Lucille was false and wedded to another; and Harrispe's cold manner proved, that, even life preserved, will not command a scoundrel's gratitude.

How Pierre St. Aubyn regained the continent it would be unnecessary to detail; but, with a deadly hatred to everything connected with the cause of royalty, he hastened to the Low Countries, and joined the ranks of the Republicans. One, without a feeling or a tie to bind him to existence, holds life at lowly estimate. Where danger was, there St. Aubyn was found to court it—death claimed others and spared him—and within a twelvemonth, the young soldier was a captain.

The opening of his career was the brightest passage in his military history. Brave, intelligent, and enthusiastic, with every ability to seize on opportunity should it have presented itself, fortune refused her favours afterwards and many outstripped him in the race of fame, to whom, in everything which constitutes a soldier he felt himself immeasurably superior. By tedious steps, at last he reached the rank of colonel;

and then, piqued at the promotion of another, which he considered should have been given in right of long service to himself, he petitioned the Emperor to be placed *en retraite*, and received as civil a *congé* as Blucher did from Frederick, viz., a royal consent to go to the devil as he pleased.

Not many weeks elapsed before the retired Colonel regretted the step he had taken, but it was now irremediable. At fifty, Paris has not the charms it possessed when men were twenty-five; and wearying of the metropolis, he set out for the south of France, to revisit the valley where he was born. Finding a part of his paternal property which had been confiscated at the Revolution for sale, he purchased a farm—and turning his sword into a ploughshare, determined to end his days, where “life’s fitful fever” had commenced.

St. Aubyn married, humbly but happily—but unfortunately, his wife died within a few years, leaving him the orphan girl who sat beside me on the steamer’s deck.

“And now, Colonel, promise me that you will not laugh, for my narrative will soon become a love tale.”

I smiled, and assured her that my gravity should equal my attention.

"It is about a twelvemonth ago," continued Ninette, "since my father's health gave evidence of decline; and a hardy constitution, which had borne thirty years' campaigning in different climates, and sustained an Eastern sun and Russian winter, began to break. I remarked the rapid change, and trembled when I recollected, that when he should be called away, I had not a near relative in the world. While my dear father lived, his pension was sufficient for our very moderate demands. That would of course terminate with his life; and his property was very trifling, save the little farm which he had purchased and improved. One evening I observed a decided alteration in the invalid, my mind foreboded the worst, and my dear father found me in tears. He strove to cheer me. 'Ninette,' he said, 'fear not that Heaven will leave innocence without friends—and when thou shalt, in the ordinary course of human existence, be called on to close thy father's eyes, the hand that shielded this head in thirty battles, can stay the orphan when she needs support; and rest assured that when I am gone, God will find for

thee, girl, another protector. Ah!" he exclaimed, 'what means this?' and he pointed to four or five mountain shepherds, who bore a heavy burden down an Alpine path that opened on our valley.

"When they approached nearer to the cottage, it was ascertained that they were carrying a dead or disabled man—and my father hastened across the vineyard to meet them, and offer any assistance in his power, if the sufferer were not already beyond the reach of human aid.

"He proved to be a stranger—an English gentleman who had been travelling in the upper range of the Pyrenees, sketching mountain scenery, and collecting Alpine plants. In returning to the lower country, he had unfortunately separated from the guides who had attended him during his wanderings—and taking an unsafe path, the rock crumbled away, and the mule and his rider were precipitated down the cliff. The animal was killed by the fall—the traveller miraculously escaped with numerous and severe bruises.

"To remove the stranger to the nearest town, in the dangerous condition he then was in, was declared unsafe—and my father's urgent request

that he should await recovery in the cottage, was gratefully acknowledged, and the offer accepted. A surgeon was procured from the next market-town,—and it being ascertained that no bones



TRAVELLER FALLING FROM CLIFF.

were broken, the leech assured his patient that his recovery would be certain, although probably it might be tedious.

“Time proved that this opinion was correct ; for two months elapsed before Edward Trevellian had regained sufficient strength to resume his journey.

“From the hour when the stranger was carried to my father’s cottage, his misfortune created an interest in my breast, and that sympathetic feeling soon ripened into ardent love. He was young, handsome, and engaging, with a highly cultivated mind and polished manners. Compared with the rude peasantry, and the illiterate proprietors I had been accustomed to associate with from infancy, whenever I returned home from the convent where I had been educated, the youthful Englishman appeared a being of a different order. ‘To see him was to love him,’—and his extensive knowledge of the world left him at no loss to detect the secret of my heart.

“Were any thing required to elevate Trevelian in my estimation, it was the studied delicacy he preserved towards me throughout the close intimacy which his indisposition had given rise to. When I entered his apartment in the morning, he welcomed me with smiles; when I bade him a ‘good night,’ he blessed me as my father did. The slightest attention elicited ardent expressions of his gratitude—while his bearing was marked by a respectful solicitude, which lead me to believe that his feelings towards

me were but a brother's. He never by a glance or an expression called a blush to my cheek ; and long before he left us, I would have confided to him every secret thought, save one—and that he had guessed already.

“For weeks he had named different periods for his departure ; but they were always postponed—and yet the plea of ill health remained no longer, for he had resumed his mountain rambles, and made me his constant companion. Once or twice in the week, he rode to the next town to seek for letters he expected ; and on these occasions, a carrier invariably brought to the cottage all the pretty trifles which please our sex, and everything that an invalid, like the old colonel could take a fancy to.

“One evening he returned from Tarbes earlier than usual—and instead of stopping, as was his custom, to tell my father the passing news, he retired to his chamber and continued writing for several hours. When I tapped at his door to tell him that supper was ready, I saw at a glance that he was thoughtful and disturbed ; he took my hand in his, pressed it more ardently than usual, told me that he

wished to speak with me for half an hour—and, as the moon was at the full, proposed a favourite walk, which, in day-light we often resorted to. I afterwards thought I had acted wrong in leaving the cottage when my father had retired to his chamber—but in Trevellian I had unbounded confidence; and, as the result proved, I found my reliance in his honour was not misplaced.

“ ‘Ninette,’ he said; as he seated me beside him on a fallen tree, ‘the time of leaving thee—so often named, and as oft adjourned, has come at last—and letters I received to-day summon me to England.’

“He paused—that single sentence, however, was sufficient—my dream of love was ended.

“ ‘And when *do* you leave us?’ I managed with difficulty to inquire.

“ ‘To-morrow, dear—*dear* Ninette.’

“I could no longer command feelings which seemed to smother me while attempting to suppress them, but burst into an agony of sorrow, and wept upon a bosom which, for the first time he pressed me to. Close as our intimacy had been, I never had addressed him

without that usual addition with which gentlemen are formally designated ; but now I passionately exclaimed,

“ ‘ *Dear Edward !* do not depart so hastily. Stay—were it only for a week.’ ”

“ ‘ Would that I could stay with thee, sweet one ! ’ he replied, ‘ not for a stated period, but for ever. Alas ! my fate is influenced by the will of others, and, as your Emperor expressed it, ‘ my destinies must be fulfilled.’ Ninette, I read long since thy secret ; I felt assured thou didst love me—I burned with an impulse almost beyond control to clasp thee to my heart, and tell thee that thy love was fondly, ardently returned ; but a stern principle of honour forbade me to disclose the secret that often was bursting from my lips ; and till the parting hour came, I determined to hide my feelings from thee. Wilt thou, dear Ninette, for my sake—for thine own—grant me three requests ? ’ ”

“ I could only, amid sobs, and tears, and kisses, in broken accents, give him the assurance he required.

“ ‘ Were I master of my own acts,’ he continued, ‘ ere that bright moon rose to-morrow evening, by every sacred tie I would make thee

mine, Ninette. But I am singularly, painfully circumstanced ; and I dare not promise what accident may prevent. Dare I prove your love ; and will you remain unwedded for a year ?”

“ ‘ Oh ! yes—yes ! a life, if thou but require it, Edward.’

“ ‘ Take this sealed paper, Ninette ; and give me thy assurance that, while thy father lives the seal shall not be broken ; or, that should you wed another, the morning you repair to the altar with him who shall supplant me in thy love, this little billet shall be committed unopened to the flames.’

“ I took the packet from his hand, and murmured an assent.

“ ‘ And now, last, and simplest request of all,—should letters come from an unknown hand, make no inquiry ; use them as they are designed to be employed ; and, under all circumstances, whether friend, adviser, protector, husband—rest thy faith in me, Ninette, strong as in holy writ ; and place implicit reliance in Edward Trevellian.’

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“ Morning came ; and he who was no longer a stranger, departed. With great regret my

father bade farewell to one who had first excited his interest, and latterly had commanded his respect. Ask not my feelings: my heart felt broken!

"Scarcely a month had passed since the English visitor left our cottage, until a letter from a banker in Paris informed my father, that five thousand francs had been placed to his credit by a foreigner, who declined to give his name; and by the same post a *billet* reached me in the well-remembered hand-writing of him I loved. It contained a diamond-ring."

She removed her glove—and on the bridal-finger shewed me a valuable brilliant; and then added, with enthusiastic ardour, as she placed a letter in my hand.

"That paper which encased the diamond was dearer far to me than all Golconda!"

I read it; and it ran thus:—

"‘Preserve, Ninette, this memorial of the absent one. The gem is not purer than his love; and the golden circle is the symbol of its endurance.

“ ‘EDWARD.’ ”

She kissed the *billet*, replaced it in her bosom, and then continued :

“My narrative now, Colonel, has nought but tragic interest. One morning, my father was later than was his custom in coming to the breakfast-table ; and, at last, when half an hour beyond his regulated time had passed, I repaired to his chamber. Alas ! the last friend, save one, I had on earth had slipped quietly from existence, and there lay the soldier, ‘ taking his rest,’—his features in such beautiful repose, as if he had smiled when the order of the Great Being came which commanded him to change time for eternity ! Death, no doubt, had visited him gently ; but, oh God ! had but his brave spirit passed, and I beside his bed,—had my name been only murmured as he departed—I could have stood the trial better.”

The recollection of him she lost brought more painful associations with it than orphanage, and, bursting into tears, Ninette’s grief was far too poignant to be controlled. I called for water. Excepting a one-eyed navigator at the wheel, and save ourselves none were on the deck, and although, in parade voice I lustily enun-

ciated 'Steward!' like the gentleman of old, who 'loudly did call, but none did answer him,' my summons was unheeded. What was to be done? I dared not desert my pretty charge. But my difficulty was removed, when a protruded hand, armed with a glass of water, was pushed across my shoulder. Who was the ministering angel? I looked up.

Blessed Mary! could it be! There stood the "accomplished malefactor," who had deserted his Irish Ariadne, and been declared an *enfant perdu* by Father Grady! I placed my hand across my eyes—not a doubt touching his identity existed—and that arch-deceiver, Peter Clancy, stood before me!

CHAPTER III.

I NEVER saw a ghost, although I have laid upon a battle-field for a night, in close communion with some hundred defunct gentlemen, who, from the turbulence of their former lives, might have been expected to be a little restless after this mortal coil had been shuffled off. I know not, therefore, what effect the re-appearance of the dead produces ; but I can bear evidence touching the astonishment that Mr. Clancy occasioned, although still in the flesh, when he handed me a glass of water.

“ Why, you excommunicated scoundrel—”

“ Arrah ! don’t be talking about excommunication, but attend to the lady,” said Master Peter.

“ Where the devil have you come from ?”

“ Come from ?” he repeated, “ I came from before the funnel,” returned the scoundrel with

surpassing indifference ; " they'll not let us take a draw of the pipe nearer to the quarter-deck on account of the quality, who can't stand the smell of a *dudheene*."

" Where are you going to ? And what thieves' errand are you bound upon ?"

" As to the exact place I'm going, I can't just say for certainty until I have a word or two with yer honor ; and I hope a gentleman's service is no disgrace," returned Mr. Clancy.

" A gentleman's service !" I exclaimed.

" Your honor's surprised, I see, to think I would condescend to it," returned red-head ; " and feaks ! I was in doubts about it myself, and had half made up my mind to accept the loan of a shilling yesterday evening, from a sheep-skin fiddler* I had a drink with on Tower-hill. But when I remembered the dog's life I had of it in the Welsh Fusileers, I got scared from taking to sojering again—"

" Were you drummed out, or did they discharge you ?"

" Neither," replied red-head with a grin, " for feaks ! I discharged myself."

" Then, you scoundrel, you deserted ?"

* A drummer.

"Why, I didn't exactly desert," returned Mr. Clancy; "but one evening I lost the regiment on the march, and never could hear what became of it afterwards. Troth! to tell God's truth, I made but few inquiries; for the sameness of tratement I got from Monday morning till Saturday night had tired me out. Devil a day rose upon me, but I was blown up by the Colonel; cursed by the adjutant; and caned by the sergeant-major."

"Any scratches on the back? 'The drummer's sign-manual between the shoulders? Eh?"

"None, blessed be God!" exclaimed Mr. Clancy, "though I was tolerably near it for joining a dozen of my friends in pulling down a public-house one evening. But the young lady's better. Jist let me throw a sketch of brandy into the tumbler, merely to take the colour of death off the water, and in less than no time the crater will be merry as a cricket."

"Be off, you scoundrel—"

"Of coorse, anything my master bids me do must be done," observed the deceiver of Judy Donovan.

"Your master, fellow?"

"Ay; and that's yerself," continued red-head

with all the coolness imaginable. "Call for me when your honor wants anything; and remember, ye'r not dependin' upon strangers now, but have a valet-de-cham of your own, and one too that any nobleman might be proud of."

I looked after Mr. Clancy with astonishment. I had known a man who went drunk to bed a civilian, rather surprised on waking the next morning, to find himself a soldier; but to be made a master with open day-light and in due sobriety, was an accident I never heard of happening to a private gentleman before.

"Are you better, dear Ninette?" I inquired of my fair companion.

"Oh, yes! quite well now. Alas! when I recal to mind that sad and sudden calamity, which left me almost friendless upon the world, my heart sinks, and tears will come although I strive to conquer woman's weakness. But I will not detain you, Colonel—but close my melancholy narrative.

"I followed my father to his last resting-place, wept over the hallowed earth that covered him, and placed a garland of laurels above the soldier's grave. For a month, I lived in deep retirement—and my sorrow was respected, for

none intruded on me. The *cure* and doctor were my only visitors; and through their consolation and advice, I was enabled gradually to regain a sufficient calmness of mind, to consider what was the most prudent course for me to adopt; and also the manner in which I should best dispose of the little farm and effects my dear father had left behind him. Need I say, Colonel, my thoughts were sadly wandering. I was in the lonely valley of the Pyrenees. Where was my heart?—In England.

“One evening I was sitting at my needle-work, when Claudine, my only attendant and companion, told me that two strangers had inquired if I were at home, and desired permission to wait upon me. They were ushered in; and in the elder I recognised the proprietor from whom my late father had purchased the farm and cottage; but the other person was totally unknown to me. Monsieur Fouchard I only knew by appearance—for my father had declined all intimacy with him, from some deceit he had practised towards himself, and indeed, from his general bad character. After a formal condolence for the loss I had sustained and a few common-place remarks, M. Fouchard

stopped suddenly, as if at a loss to proceed with the grave business which, no doubt, had brought him to the cottage. I wished to abridge an interview that was both unsought for and disagreeable—and inquired to what cause M. Fouchard's visit was to be ascribed?

“‘Had Mademoiselle made any decision yet, as to whether she should continue in the cottage?’ was the reply.

“‘I stared at the man—for the question appeared impertinent.

“‘Really, M. Fouchard, your inquiry strikes me as being one that a stranger is not entitled to make. Whether I shall retain or dispose of this property can be of no consequence to you.’

“‘Excuse me, Madame. The owner of a property naturally inquires, when he has lost one tenant, who may be the person that is likely to become successor.’

“‘The owner of a property!’ I repeated, ‘I am the owner of this cottage; and who will tenant it, I shall decide upon when necessary.’

“‘Excuse me,’ returned M. Fouchard, ‘Mademoiselle is under a mistake; my friend here will have the pleasure to explain it.’

“And rising from his chair, he quitted the

chamber, and left me alone with a very unprepossessing man, whom I discovered afterwards to be his lawyer.

“ I shall hasten over the details of this interview. It appeared that my unsuspecting parent had been completely over-reached by M. Fouchard ; and that while he had, as he believed, made himself master of this little property, he was by some legal roguery merely a tenant for life ; and, consequently, that I was now at the mercy of a knave. The lawyer made use of much circumlocution before he reached the end, for truth to say, it was rather a delicate task which he had undertaken ; as in effecting it, he was obliged to prove that his patron was a scoundrel.

“ ‘ Well, Sir,’ I said, when he had wound up his tedious statement, ‘ I comprehend my position perfectly ; and the same protecting power by whom I was enabled to sustain a father’s loss, will support me under a reverse of fortune. I shall seek another home, and quit this cottage incontinently.’

“ ‘ That home, Mademoiselle, is already at your command—’ and the lawyer made a pause.

“ ‘ What mean you, Sir ?’ I inquired.

“ ‘That M. Fouchard has determined ‘to marry, and tenders his heart and fortune to Mademoiselle St. Aubyn,’ returned the advocate.

“ ‘His heart !’ I exclaimed indignantly ; ‘ he has no heart—he, who would cheat the man who confided in him, and rob the orphan of her small inheritance ! Retire, Sir ; and say to your employer, that the daughter of St. Aubyn would prefer menial service to an alliance with a scoundrel.’

“ I rose and left the room, and the lawyer rejoined his patron, and departed.

“ I suppose that he, whom I learned afterwards was the infamous agent through whom my poor father had been cheated, delivered my contemptuous rejection of M. Fouchard’s hand in the language it had been conveyed, for an immediate system of annoyance commenced, and formal steps were taken to eject me from my humble home. One evening, after a notary had served me with some vexatious process, I was sitting in deep melancholy, and wondering when I was turned out upon the world, where I should find a home. Claudine, faithful to the last, endeavoured to console me.

“ ‘ Ah ! Mademoiselle, why despond thus ?

I had a dream last night, and fancied that Monsieur Trevellian had come back, and the notary was sent for to draw the marriage contract. I see you look daily at the letter he left you, and yet you will not venture to break the seal. *Courage!* who knows what good news that little billet may bring yet.'

"I took the letter from my bosom. I looked at the superscription as I had a thousand times before. I read the sentence anew—'To be opened in the hour of need!'—'And,' exclaimed Claudine, 'is not that hour come? An orphan girl beset by rogues and lawyers. Come, Mademoiselle! are you a soldier's daughter, and afraid? Ah me! had the poor Colonel had a little prudence instead of the courage he could have spared, we should not be persecuted by that bad man, Fouchard, and his villanous *employés*.'

"I still held the letter in my hand. Dare I break wax which possibly contained the fatal information that an insuperable barrier between Edward and myself existed, and that Trevellian was lost to me? Claudine snatched the letter from my hand, and in the attempt I made to retain it, the seal was broken!

"With a desperate effort I unclosed the

well-remembered hand-writing of the master of my heart; and thus ran the contents of the billet:

“ ‘ Ninette,

“ ‘ Repair instantly to England. Fearlessly entrust your destinies to me; although a husband may not be waiting to receive the exile, she will find a brother in

“ ‘ EDWARD TREVELLIAN.’

“ ‘ There were directions added as to the means by which I should apprize him that I was leaving France; and a house in London was referred to, which, on my arrival, I was instantly to communicate with.

“ ‘ Claudine accompanied me to Paris. There I received the money placed for me in the bankers; then parting with my humble but faithful companion, she returned to the south of France, and I proceeded to the capital of Britain.

“ ‘ I found a sealed packet waiting for me at the appointed place. It simply directed me to repair to Hull; and assured me that there I should find one in waiting who would take charge of the wanderer. Who, save one, can

that protector be? My heart whispers that it is Edward. But, ah! *mon cher Colonel*, in what character will he present himself? The husband, or the brother? Alas! I dread that in Trevellian I shall only find the latter."

I endeavoured to remove her fears, and succeeded in restoring her confidence. Dinner was announced, and we obeyed the summons.

I confess that the peculiar position in which this young and unfriended foreigner was placed, was to me a source of much inquietude. Who was this man who wrapped himself in mystery, and on whom her happiness—her hopes—ay! her very honour were dependant? Some circumstances induced me to think favourably of him, while others led me to distrust his designs. "I will protect the orphan!" I mentally determined. "Others may offer brotherly attention, Ninette; but I shall be a father to thee, if it be required!"

The evening was remarkably fine, and we returned immediately after dinner upon deck, whither I had directed the steward to bring wine and fruit. While we had been in the cabin, the steamer had rounded a low point of land, and a coast, whose navigation was particularly danger-

ous—were one to judge from the numerous lighthouses and beacons, which were erected for the direction of the mariner—was now fully displayed. A man whom I had noticed in the morning, and who appeared to keep apart from the rest of the passengers had hurried from the dinner-table like Ninette and me, and observing that we regarded the coast we passed with much attention, he came forward, touched his hat respectfully, and explained the uses of the buildings, and the positions of the shoals and channels.

“You seem to know this coast most intimately?”

“Ay,” said the mariner, “and that too at midnight as well as in noon-day. Mark you, Sir, yon sandy cove? See, it trends inland on the north of the white beacon.”

“Yes,” I replied, “I can trace it distinctly.”

“There, five years ago, was I found lifeless to all appearance, when day dawned on the morning of the sixth of January. They carried me to the Parson’s house, and after an hour or two restored animation. Would to God they had left me where they found me, or come a little later.”

I looked at the unhappy man. He was passed the noon of life, and exhibited a frame and face which had been exposed from youth to storm and sun, and had endured every severity of climate—

“From Egypt’s fires to Zembla’s frost.”

His figure was middle-sized, square, and muscular; and his face, notwithstanding its expression of despondency, showed all the lines which indicate endurance of purpose, and contempt of danger. I never saw dejection and determination so strangely blended upon the human countenance; but still the union of such characteristics is not uncommon; and I remember among my acquaintance—alas! how few of the earlier ones remain!—men with nerve to crown a breach, or head a boarding party, who would sink under some paltry disappointment that a school-girl would smile at.

“My friend,” I said, handing him a glass of wine, “you look every inch a man. The bold and brave meet the storm when it comes, and rise superior to misfortune. You have before you twenty years of vigorous life, if there be reliance in thews and sinews; and during that space,

what may not prudence and good luck accomplish?"

"It is true, Sir," returned the mariner; and I admit that fortune has smiled upon me frequently; but, curse the jade! after a gleam of sunshine she always took me aback, and at a time when I least expected it. Well, I bore misfortune like a man; buckled with the world anew; pulled up lee-way gallantly; but d—n me! I never could come to anchor in the long run. I have been laid lifeless on the beach; passed thirteen burning days floating on the wide Atlantic, without one drop of water to moisten my parching lips. I have been cut down upon a Frenchman's deck: dragged out three weary years in prison. One while, have been master of a thousand pounds; another, not worth this button on my jacket. I have served on board a man-o'-war; sailed a privateer's-man; sealed on the islands of New Zealand, and whaled on the coast of Greenland. Ten times, I was master of a little fortune; and ten times, accident left me on the world without a guinea. Well, I struggled up the hill anew—but even iron will not last for ever; and though it may seem an idle vaunt to say it, as stout a heart as ever

manned a gun in action, or reefed a topsail in a gale of wind, is now broken—ay broken—fairly broken !”

“ Nay, never despond, my friend. Remember the Scottish adage, ‘ Tyne heart tyne a’.’ Before morning breaks, the night is darkest; and though that slippery baggage has frowned of late, Dame Fortune may yet make the *amende honorable* ”

“ Were I,” returned the mariner, “ alone to pay the penalty of my madness in placing rash reliance in the statements of specious knaves, by Heaven ! I could muster courage to still seek out an honest independence, although I had to commence life at fifty, and that too before the mast. But, and in a few sentences you shall know all that is necessary to be known of one of the greatest fools who, even in these days of folly, allowed himself to be robbed by a gang of swindlers.”

“ I shall listen with attention,” I replied, and the unhappy dupe thus continued :

“ Seven years ago, I married ; and never did man wed one more deserving of his love and confidence, than the woman who is now mourning over the folly of her husband. I had saved

a little money; but children came fast—the coasting-trade was bad—and I began to feel uneasy at the prospect of a large family and declining means, when an offer was made me to command a whaler going to the South Seas. Four years is a large spell of human life; and it is hard to part with those we love for so long a term of one's existence. But tempting advantages were connected with the offer; and I sacrificed my own feelings to the interest of those dependant on me, and accepted the appointment.

“I returned at the end of the usual time, after a safe and prosperous voyage, richer by twelve hundred pounds; and when considering in what manner I could best invest my little capital, those two ruffians who you see drinking their wine below, and laughing in their sleeves at those they have plundered so successfully, marked me for a victim. It would only madden me to tell, and pain you to listen to the means by which the scoundrels fooled me. It is enough to say, that their scheme was a mere bubble, and concocted for the sole purpose of spoliating unwary individuals like myself. Their bill was scouted; their swindling company dissolved:

and *I am ruined*. When a man has four helpless beings looking to him for daily bread—ah, Sir! it is a bitter thought, that their natural protector had flung the means of supporting them away!”

He turned round. I saw a tear stealing down his sun-burnt cheek; and explained to my fair companion the cause of the sorrow that she witnessed.

“Ah! then, *mon Colonel!*” observed the artless girl, with a sigh; there are more Fouchards in the world than one!”

“Alas! dear Ninette,” I replied, “there are Fouchards to be found in every clime and country.”

* * * *

Early the next morning, the steamer entered the Humber—and the pier, where our voyage was to terminate, became visible from the deck, and an acquaintance singularly formed, and one whose remembrance will cause deep interest when I recal it, must end. As we neared the city, my fair companion became more nervous and unhappy; and now and again, though she strove to overcome her grief, tears would start to the eye, and betray the painful struggle

between hope and fear which was passing in her bosom.

"Courage, my dear Ninette," I whispered, as I marked the agitation of my fair companion.

"Ah! my dear friend!" she replied, "it is fearful to think that the crisis of my fate is at hand; and that half an hour will determine the future colour of a life."

The vessel reached the pier. Many were there expecting the arrival of their friends; but poor Ninette looked earnestly at the crowd upon the wharf, and no face save that of the stranger met her anxious eye. I conducted her on shore, saw her luggage safely landed, and brought her to the hotel named in the instructions written for her guidance, by the mysterious personage who had apparently assumed the control of her future fortunes. At her desire, I inquired from the waiter whether a young lady had been expected to arrive by the steamer, and were any person in attendance, to receive her?

"Yes; there was a lady in the drawing-room," and he showed us the way to the apartment.

The appearance of the stranger was prepossessing. A woman probably past fifty, and

one whose beauty in earlier life must have been remarkable. She politely welcomed the fair traveller ; and, as I thought, examined her with marked attention. In tolerable French, she proceeded to inform Mademoiselle St. Aubyn, that Sir Edward Trevellian had confided her for the present to her care.

“ Sir Edward Trevellian !” burst from Ninette’s lips.

“ Yes ; on the death of his uncle a few months ago, Edward had succeeded to the baronetcy and estates.”

I observed the colour totally desert the fair one’s cheeks, as with an evident exertion and in trembling accents, she muttered a hope that “ Sir Edward was well.”

“ Oh, yes !” was the reply ; “ and busy preparing for his marriage, which is intended to be solemnized almost immediately.”

Poor Ninette ! That fatal communication was too much. She uttered a wild scream—and had I not caught her in my arms, would have fallen on the carpet. The task of supporting the fainting girl was not long left to me ; for, from a screen behind, a man sprang forward, pressed her to his bosom,

and as he covered her lips with kisses, exclaimed :

“ Ay, dearest one ! circumstances have changed, and I can now follow the dictates of my heart. Before to-morrow’s sun sinks in ocean, Edward Trevellian will indeed be wedded ; and thou, my sweet Ninette, may name the bride. There—I confide thee to a mother’s embrace ; and if truth in love be good warranty for filial duty, in thee, my loved one, she will find a daughter she may pride in. And, Sir,” he continued, turning to me, “ as I suspect I am under much obligation to you for protecting a lady, whom singular circumstances prevented me from protecting myself, may I inquire the name of him to whom I am so deeply debtor ? ”

I handed him my card, and added—

“ One, Sir Edward, who, had you not decided on making Ninette a wife, had resolved on making her a daughter. But to older and stronger rights I must defer, and I fear continue childless.”

“ Not so, my dear Colonel. Lady Trevellian will require a father to-morrow at the altar ; and where will she find a kinder or a braver one ? ”

I returned a willing consent—and next morning gave my parental benediction to Ninette Trevellian : and, may I add, pressed the lips of the most interesting and artless girl, whose “course of love” had been pure as constant, and ended as it should do—smoothly.

CHAPTER IV.

SUNDAY has dawned again ; and although Callum Beg declares in Waverley, that it never comes abune a Highland pass with an unpronounceable name, I dissent from the young reprobate altogether ; and I hereby avow, that I never saw a Sabbath kept more religiously than yesterday's was in the Lammermuir. Accident gave it a deeper interest—for the young man killed by lightning on Friday, was on that day to be interred in the ancient burial-ground attached to the Abbey of Saint Bathans.

If funeral ceremonies, as some assert, portray the character of a nation, both England and Ireland should reform theirs altogether. The former is marked by heartless parade—the

latter by more disgusting brutality. The troop of idle blackguards who escort an English funeral through the streets on foot, will be seen grouped on the top of the hearse when returning, indulging in the Virginian weed, and, frequently, in uproarious laughter;—whilst in Ireland, a procession to the grave is followed by an endless banditti with cudgels and cota-mores,* and a tribe of women *kinnaying*,† or courting, according to age, circumstance, or inclination. Of the abomination of an Irish wake, it is enough to say that it commences with drunken revelry, and ends not unfrequently in murder;—while the wail of death, in one end of the cabin, is answered by hilarious mirth from the room where the corpse is laid out, accompanied too often by songs not remarkable for their delicacy. I remember going once to the house of death, where a fine young man had been struck dead by accident; and avoiding the revelry in the room where the deceased was confined, I sought out the widowed girl—for a girl

* A frieze great-coat.

† The *kinneagh* is the wild lament performed by women who are paid for their trouble, and who care as much for the departed, as they do for a dead horse.

she was, scarcely nineteen ;—and what added melancholy interest to the visitation, hourly expecting to become a mother. In her, poor soul ! there was no mockery of grief—no parade of sorrow. “ Ah ! Colonel,” she said, as I offered consolation as I best could, “ I never thought I loved Pat half so well until I lost him !” At the moment a burst of merriment broke from the chamber where the dead man lay. I saw every feature of her face convulse—every limb shudder, as she wildly grasped my hand in hers. “ Oh, God ! I could bear all but that laughter !” she exclaimed. “ It kills me, Colonel !”

* * * *

In England, the wretched tenement of clay is occasionally kept over ground until it becomes offensive ; while in Ireland, an indecent haste too frequently marks the hurried funeral. In Scotland they manage matters better,—the house of death exhibits a religious quiet ; not a whisper disturbs the mourner’s sorrows ; save when the minister turns the occasion to account, pointing out that the grave is the goal which prince and peasant must reach alike—the end of his hopes, his pursuits, his toil, and

his ambition. The same decency with which the bed of death has been respected, distinguishes the conduct of the funeral ; and the transit of the departed to his narrow house, is solemn as regards the dead—imposing, as a lesson to the living.

I was apprized that the body was to be lifted at eleven in the forenoon ; and as four miles of moorland must be traversed, it would require a couple of hours to reach the Abbey, where one cut off so suddenly in youth and health was to take his rest. I clomb the wooded height which domineers Mrs. Pringle's caravanserai—and from its summit, obtained a charming and extensive view over one of the sweetest districts of the Border country. When I say that—as Tippoo Sultaun used to conclude his letters—“Need I say more ?”

The beauty of the Lammermuir is only equalled by its loneliness ; miles occasionally intervene between the farm-steadings ; and I have fished the Whitadder from Auld Martha's to the Elmford, without meeting an angler on the stream. As I looked from the hill over a vast expanse of swelling knolls and cultivated valleys, the silent repose which reigned over all was

most imposing ; for here, the sabbath is so rigidly respected, that no act that could infringe on its solemnity would be attempted. I felt how perfect the seclusion was—and repeated Byron's words involuntarily,

“ This—this is solitude ! ”

Still the picture was imperfect ; but the calm and holy silence of all I surveyed wanted but one thing to render its melancholy quietude complete, and that was the appearance of the distant funeral. From my elevation I commanded a view of at least two miles of the mainland it must pass over, and presently several dark figures rounded a green knoll, and told me that the procession to the narrow house was now approaching.

The funeral attendants who followed the hearse, whose white-craped mort-cloth told that the occupant was unmarried, did not exceed twenty ; but as they approached the Abbey, from different farm-steadings, the owners and their servants joined the funeral, until the number that followed the corpse might have reached to fifty. All were habited in decent mourning,

and walked two and two. When the hearse reached the entrance of the burial-ground, the body was removed on hand-spikes—the father and elder brother at the head, and two younger kinsmen at the feet. No formula for the departed was read ; no prayer was offered up ; not a whisper passed the lips of the lookers-on ; but a throstle whistled in the ash-tree that overhung the Abbey, and a red-breast sang merrily from a white-thorn bush. The grave was filled, the sods replaced and flattened with the spade—and the ceremony being complete, every head was uncovered for a minute, and then the mourners left the grave-yard with the same solemn silence with which they had entered it. In my mind, nothing can equal the imposing simplicity of a Scottish funeral. With the obsequies of him whose trade was war, the wailing dead-march, the unbraced drum, the roll of musquetry, happily assimilate—the pealing organ, the torch-lit cloister, the stoled priest, the surpliced choristers, become the noble well. But for him, who through humble life, had “held the noiseless tenor of his way,” a silent ceremonial and a solitude like Saint Bathans should be all that told

that the quiet of existence was exchanged for the

“Sleep that knows not breaking.”

As I lay on the hill-side in the morning, and saw the quiet procession issue from the glen, I could not but contrast its reverend decency, with the brutal indifference to the feelings of the living which mark an Irish funeral. The hundreds of lawless blackguards which accompany the latter are trooped after by as many women; and the semblance of sorrow is not even assumed. The laugh, and joke, and “coortin,” continues till the grave is reached—and afterwards, the public-house succeeds the cemetery. The orgies there are bloody or brutal, just as the state of factious feeling may exist; and the next Petty Sessions probably discloses a death or delinquency, at which a well-regulated mind will shudder. I know that I risk much from telling the simple truth; and that on every one who describes Ireland as it is, was, and will be (ehéu!) unwashed patriots pour out their phials. The discharge is not destructive; and as the “gutter” commissioner of ‘the Times’—by the way, I never could see the point of Dan’s

epithet—survived his audacity in asserting that—barring the dung-hill that blocked it up—there was marvellous good air on the Derrinane estate conveyed through the unglazed windows—an interesting association between pigs and children—and stepping-stones to assist the visitor to reach the hearth without the necessity of wading the floor—I have but little to apprehend. Well, I assert fearlessly, that among the “finest pisantry” will be found the most superlative ruffians—*voilà l'exemple*.

Is there a man who has ever been cursed with a temporary residence in an Irish caravan-serai, and who, if his hapless lot fell out on the day or evening of a funeral, who will ever forget the same? The opening of the visit, after dust has been committed to dust, commences with loud demands for whiskey; the noise increases; the uproar becomes louder still; oath and argument succeed; all speak and swear together: and then a difference arises among “the merrie throng” touching a disputed noggin. The hostess—for generally the presiding divinity over these temples dedicated to “the feast of reason and the flow of soul” is feminine—conducts her esta-

blishment on the principle that "the word is pitch and pay,"—and "she honest woman won't stand no gammon whatsoever," as the denizens of Cockayne express it. Pat declares that Peter called the last subsidy, and refuses to fork out three-pence. Peter demurs; the landlady insists; the lie direct is followed by a blow; a row commences; the landlady endeavours to eject the company with a hot poker or scalding water into the street, as in the West they call the Queen's high road; and what in the meanwhile becomes of you? Your apartment is invaded by the non-belligerent requesting shelter, while a broth of a boy dashes in to demand which of the contending houses you patronize, Montague or Capulet, in order that if you have made a wrong choice, you may catch the condign upon the spot. In ten minutes the affair is happily arranged. Patrick Casey goes to the county infirmary with a fractured skull, and Peter Morraghan agrees to pay the controverted three-pence. Such is the rise, progress, and decline of an *Irish row*.

I reached old Martha's hostelry before any of the attendants on the funeral arrived. The day was painfully hot; and over four miles of

bare unsheltered heather, a funeral procession would be exhausting. I believe consequently, that, with half a dozen exceptions, all who had followed the departed, repaired, after they saw him consigned to kindred clay, to Mattie's for refreshment. The decorum that was observed I shall never forget; and though separated but two or three yards from the kitchen, I could not have guessed whether two or twenty were regaling there. Orders for what they wanted were delivered in a whisper; and within an hour, when the lassie came to lay the dinner-cloth, I was the only occupant of Mrs. Pringle's hotel.

A very different scene, on the last Sabbath evening, was presented in this quiet change-house. A dozen Irish vagabonds penetrated this secluded glen from the Edinburgh railway, where they have been for a year or two employed. After two hours' noise and drinking, they fell out among themselves; and a one-armed pensioner and old Mattie, who strove to pacify these savages, were both brutally knocked down and trampled on. After this valorous feat, these splendid specimens of "the finest pisantry on earth" levanted in double quick,

and, as old Mattie added with a sigh, "forgot to pay the lawing." Indeed, the character given of the Irish in the district between Ayton and Dunbar is deplorable. Earning at least double the wages they could obtain at home, and even in some cases treble the amount, their conduct throughout a term of two years has been infamous. The Sabbath, observed so religiously in Scotland, was desecrated by their drunken debauchery; and for a week after their monthly pay-day, no traveller dare venture to pass the road, as troops of these intoxicated savages would fall on the solitary stranger, and, without the semblance of provocation, maltreat a man they had never seen before. At last, these barbarians became so intolerable, that it was necessary to obtain a military force from Edinburgh to restrain their violence. 'Tis said by schoolmen that people earn golden opinions by their virtues. Now what the metallic character may be of the reminiscences which the Irish navigators—a queer term, by the way, for men whose operations are exclusively confined to *terra firma*—will leave behind, would be rather difficult to determine.

CHAPTER V.

MUCH difference in taste is evinced in estimating the virtues of a country. Now, if the opinion of the traveller who blessed God he was in Christendom again were correct, in Scotland you might fancy you were in heathen land, as from one end to the other of "the land of cakes," a solitary gallows could not be found. Here and there you will find a pair of stocks—but, like the cuttie-stool, their "occupation's gone." I was, from the door of Mrs. Agnes Dodds—to whose hospitable care I can safely recommend the traveller who visits Norham—looking up the street at a Herculean sort of pepper-box in granite which has replaced the ancient cross, and carelessly observed to my

ancient companion, in what excellent order the stocks which stand beside it were—

“Ah, these jouns are na ower auld, for they were mad new aboot twenty years ago, and I’ll tell ye, Colonel, why. A tinker stole a guse fra the minister, and the constable set him in the stocks. It was a fine simmer nicght, and they thought they would leave him to cool his taes, and meditate on his transgressions until morning. The jouns were auld and ricketty, and when the bedrel rose next day to let the deevil loose, hegh, mon ! stocks and tinker were gone, for he had gane aff after dark, an’ carried the jouns alang wi’ him.”

“Another Sampson with the gates of Gaza, George ; and are the present jouns, as you call them, often tenanted ?”

“Na, na. It’s full ten year syne I mind that ony one was cockit in them, an’ that was an Irishman an’ his wife, for smashin’ a’ the chiney-ware in auld Rob Donaldson’s crockery shop. Weel, the funniest part was when they were lockit in, an’ their legs safe in the woodie, and they could na get ony one to fight wi’, they differed themsels, and hegh, faith ! the woman lickit the mon. I mind her weel—the quean

was unco' strang, and offered af they would free her fra the jougs to box ony man in Norham."

"Ah!" I exclaimed, "Hurra, for ould Ireland! for even the Norham stocks brought with its history a pleasing and a flattering reminiscence of 'the gem of the sea.'" There was indeed, a heroine; another Penthisilia—a regular out-and-outer—a spirit not to be subdued—one that even with her legs in limbo, scorned to give in, and offered to come to the scratch with any gentleman willing to set-to—the best he or she to win, and no mistake. It is melancholy to think that in the stream of time this lady's name has perished. But there's no justice for Ireland, or this forgotten fair would have formed a prominent feature in the statistical account of the parish. During a Peninsular siege, a soldier's wife received the brevet rank of "heroine of Matagorda," for carrying a pitcher of water from a well that lay directly under the fire of the enemy—Grace Darling was immortalized for saving the crew and passengers of a wrecked steamer—but would either of them, with "their taes cockit in the woodie," as old George termed it, have made the sporting offer

which the fair daughter of Erin did? Well may we exclaim in Byron's words—

“Strike thy bold harp, green isle—the lady is thine own!”

*

*

*

Confound thunder showers. The Tweed was clearing beautifully, when in some of the Cheviots a water-spout appears to have burst—for although we have not had a drop of rain here, the stream is drummelled* and without any apparent cause, the river has waxed,† and down it rolls in colour more like XXX than water. Shade of Walton! thou, patient as thou wert, would have execrated the elements, and will sympathize with thy disciple. I had procured a bowl-full of lively minnows, screwed my rod together, wound, not the willow, but half-a-dozen casting lines round my hat, and expected at least a creel-full, when in comes old George to announce that “she’s sair drum-melled, and winna answer at a’.” I submit. It is the will of Allah!

I was sitting and almost, as it may be imagined, inconsolable, when a newly-discovered cannon-ball was brought me, and I have added an invaluable specimen to my collection. Every

* Muddled. † *Wax*, means to swell or increase.

man on some point or other is insane. I admit on this subject I am generally supposed to be a little *distract*, not that I harbour any design against human life by a fancy for these agents of destruction, and take this preliminary step towards evading justice by pleading monomania. All men have peculiar tastes. Some collect antiquated books, others delight in congregating halters, and why may not I indulge in cannon balls?

After dinner I strolled down the Tweed to the village of Horncliff, where a beautiful bend in the stream forms one of the best salmon pools which the river offers to the angler. We passed through the court-yard of the castle, and took the pathway which leads through the *Mains*, a scope of rich land, in old times used for pasturing the cattle which supplied rations to the garrison.*

* There is, in the British Museum, Cal. B, 6. 216, a curious Memoir of the Dacres on the state of Norham Castle, in 1522, not long after the battle of Flodden. The inner ward, or keep, is represented as impregnable:—"The provisions are three great vats of salt eels, forty-four kine, three hogsheads of salted salmon, forty quarters of grain, besides many cows, and four hundred

From this side the site of the breaching battery on a hill beyond the Tweed, at a distance of six or seven hundred yards, and from which the Scottish armies battered the fortress, is best seen; and the rebuilding of the eastern *revêtement* is evidently the last repairs the castle received, and proves that the fire of the besiegers, notwithstanding the defective artillery of the time, was impressive.

The masonry of the keep gives evidence of being frequently injured and restored; and I should say that one part of the donjon was at least three centuries older than the other. The exterior is mere patchwork—large sections of the walls being built indifferently of granite and red freestone. The extensive vaults, of which a part of the arches have fallen in, were no doubt thickly tenanted with prisoners. The castellan was his own chief-justice, and to effect a general jail delivery he had every convenience, for within a bow-shot of the huge tower stands “the hanging hill,” and close beside it “the gibbet field.”

sheep, lying under the castle-wall nightly; but a number of the arrows wanted feathers, and a good fletcher (*i. e.* maker of arrows) was required.”—*History of Scotland*, vol. II. p. 201.

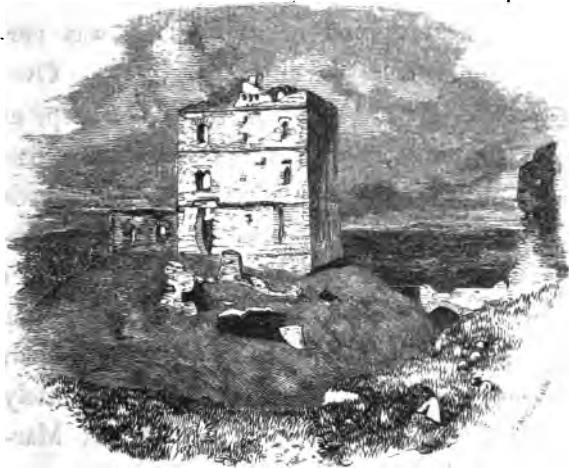
What a pleasant prospect the windows of a feudal castle would present, when half-a-dozen malefactors had been justified that morning? No wonder that my Lady Ford levanted, and took up her head-quarters in Edinburgh—for Norham, if Scott's description is not ultra-poetical, was at best but a rough establishment; even the conduct of the clergy, including the domestic chaplain himself, being at times such as might have been considered a little irregular.*

* " Our Norham vicar, woe betide,
Is all too well in case to ride.
The priest of Shoreswood—he could rein
The wildest war-horse in your train;
But then, no spearmen in the hall
Will sooner swear, or stab, or brawl.
Friar John of Tillmouth were the man;

* * * * *

But that good man, as ill befalls,
Hath seldom left our castle walls,
Since on the vigil of St. Bede,
In evil hour he crossed the Tweed,
To teach Dame Alison her creed.
Old Bughtrig found him with his wife;
And John, an enemy to strife,
Sans frock and hood fled for his life.
The jealous churl hath deeply swore,
That, if again he ventures o'er,
He shall shrieve penitent no more." MARMION.

Amid the mass of grass-grown ruins which cover the extensive area which lies within



NORHAM CASTLE.

the *enceinte* of this once important fortress, but one part of the remnant of the external defences can be traced distinctly, and that is the *fosse* which insulated the keep. I presume it was a wet ditch, although whence supplied with water is hard to ascertain. About half a century since, the well that afforded water to the castle was accidentally discovered ; but it was perfectly filled up with the rubbish and the *débris* of the donjon.

It was excavated by order of Sir Francis Blake, until, at the depth of ninety feet, the water rose. The masonry was excellent, and proved that the art of well-sinking was perfectly understood in auld lang syne. Over the orifice, a huge flag is placed, to keep, as old George says, "the sheep an' callants frae tumlin' in." The loss of valuable quadrupeds would be certainly inconvenient to the proprietors, but I do think that Norham might well spare a dozen or two "callants"—for the alarming spread of population in an Irish fishing village, in my opinion, falls infinitely short of this prolific place. Let Harriet Martineau avoid it.

About the time that the well was discovered, permission was given the persons who tenanted the adjacent farm, to clear out the ditch, and manure the land with the earthy matter it contained, probably the deposit of many centuries. In the course of this operation, the remains of many ancient weapons were discovered, and a human skeleton was found in excellent preservation. What a train of fanciful conjecture arises from this resurrection of decayed mortality? Was that death the

effect of accident, or midnight murder? Did the poor wretch, staggering hilariously from a drunken revel, find this ignoble grave? Or did the considerate castellan, in compliment to some fair one's feelings, substitute water for hemp, as the casement of my lady's boudoir looked out upon the hanging hill? What strange and fearful recollections are associated with the secret history of every feudal fortress!

In the process of clearing the choked-up ditch, more valuable reliques of antiquity than "cold iron," were discovered, and tradition says, that a chest of treasure was dug up by the fortunate excavators. "I dinna tak on me," remarked old George, "to say hoo far the story may be true—but this I know weel fra my ain feyther, that the men unyoked their carts in the middle o' the day, and never were seen at a pleugh-tail afterwards, but lived and died like gentlemen."

Several of the cannon-balls in my possession were found in the clearing of this *fosse*. The most remarkable is a stone shot of enormous size, and most excellent workmanship. It is a perfect sphere, and would require a ten-inch

Paxheim to discharge it. Its discovery goes to prove what tradition has asserted, namely, that at one of the earlier sieges of Norham Castle, the celebrated "Mons Meg" was employed; save that gun, there was no piece of ordnance extant at the time which had calibre for such a bullet.

The variety of the balls, and the difference in their material, is strongly illustrative of the rude construction of old artillery, and all the appurtenances attached to field and siege ordnance; and the confusion which of necessity would arise from the number of bores of the cannon in those days, must have sadly embarrassed the men employed in working them. In the collection I have made, I have balls used at the sieges of Norham, Tantallon, Berwick, and Dunbar; and out of twenty-one, there are seventeen of different calibres, ranging from what in metal, would weigh seventy or eighty pounds, to one of four ounces and a half. Some are stone, others cast-iron, two are malleable metal, roughly rounded on the anvil; one is granite covered with a coating of lead, and several are lead entirely. The largest of the latter metal, weighs five pounds and a half,

and was discharged from the Castle of Norham at an advancing enemy—as it was found this present spring, in a field at the distance of a quarter of a mile from the keep, by men occupied in draining.

The balls of hammered iron were discovered in the ruins of Tantallon, and bear evident appearance of being rudely fabricated by the sledge, as every portion of the surface carries on it marks of the forge-hammer. The larger is a nine-pound shot, the smaller a six-pounder—and both, I apprehend, had been projected from “Thrawn-mouth’d Mow or her Marrow,” and one of the “two great botcards.”* The casting of the metal balls—three, four, and five pounds, is spherically correct, but the surface so rough, that they seem to have been moulded in coarse sand.

* James V. laid siege to Tantallon in 1527, “and for its reduction, borrowed from the Castle of Dunbar, then belonging to the Duke of Albany, two great cannons, whose names, as Pitscottie informs us with laudable minuteness, were ‘Thrawn-mouth’d Mow and her Marrow;’ also, ‘two great botcards, and two moyan, two double falcons, and four quarter falcons; for the safe guiding and re-delivery of which, three lords were laid in pawn at Dunbar.’ ”—*Marmion*.

The spiral stair-case, by which the upper floors and battlements of the castle could be reached, was demolished a century ago, from the Norham callants in their search for jackdaws and young pigeons, having occasionally met with serious accidents in climbing these lofty walls. "At last," continued old George, "a bit body of a sweep had a tumble fra the top, and hurt himself a wee thing."

"Egad, he must have been rather the worse of such a tumble, George. Did he break any bones?"

"I dinna ken that precesely; but I know that he broke his neck," was the cool reply.

"That was quite sufficient, George."

"So to prevent mair damage, the whole of the stones were pued awa."

"And," I said to myself, "was all this trouble taken because this sooty gentleman dislocated his vertebræ? Ah! blessings on you, Tipperary! If a corporation of sweeps cracked their necks in thee, thou land of Goshen, the devil a man from one end of the county to the other would step over the threshold, if a recurrence of the accident could be prevented by the removal of a chimney-pot!"

CHAPTER VI.

ONE of the most striking entrances from the English border into the Land of Cakes, is by the beautiful stone bridge which crosses the Tweed at Coldstream. The scenery is quiet—nothing that an artist would value at a pin's fee—above, a fine, broad expanse of shining river—while immediately below, a dam-head drawn from bank to bank, forms an enormous pool where salmon, fresh from sea, delight to rest in, after their first run from salt-water has been successfully but laboriously accomplished. But though the artist would pass it unregarded by, and certainly,

“Tweed's fair river, broad and deep,”

affords so many splendid and romantic combinations, on which the pencil may be gloriously

employed, that tamer subjects will not arrest attention, there is another class of peripatetic philosophers who swear by Coldstream Bridge. To the worshipper of Walton there is fascination in the pool—while above the bridge, the bright unruffled sheet of water which the eye meets for a quarter of a mile, in the repose of a still spring evening literally appears animated—every yard of the brilliant surface being broken by a thousand circles—and each announcing that an ephemeral history has been completed, and an insect is no more.

But though this long smooth expanse of bright water is tenanted by a myriad of the fish an angler loves, he rarely hopes to fill a basket there, until sky, wind, and water favourably unite to assist him. Where the stream elbows off, and becomes invisible from the bridge, there lies the El Dorado. For a bow-shot, the Tweed falls gradually over a rocky bottom, affording such a constant succession of sharp runs and broken water, that if the eidoleon of Isaac the “quaint and cruel”—as Byron most irreverently terms that father of the faithful—be ever permitted to revisit this pale orb, can it

be doubted but many a midnight hour is passed there quietly by the old gentleman. Indeed the quantity of trouts which frequent these shallows is immense. On the preceding evening, being unfortunately alone in mine inn, and not being inclined to resort to the Irish expedient of drinking the right-hand against the left, I made a late sally to the river. To this—not an hundred yards of water, I confined myself—and in an hour-and-half—all the space that light permitted—I had basketed five dozen and a half of scaly victims, ranging in weight from an ounce to a pound.

* * * *

A spaight had brought up a number of clean fish early in the week, and although the water had cleared, the wind and sky appeared by mutual consent to have entered into an unholy alliance against the angler. As even approached, however, a few clouds and a fitful breeze induced me to make an attempt upon the salmon-pool below the bridge, and I despatched my *fidus Achates*—Mr. Clancy—to put my rod together and launch the cobble. My head-quarters were at Cornfield—an ugly

village with a most comfortable inn—and ten minutes' walk brought me to the scene of action, where boat and rod were waiting my arrival.

The weather proved unfavourable after all. The clouds were "few and far between"—the breeze came in what sailors term "cats'-paws."—and when you had secured the assistance of the one, the other was certain to be absent. I stirred a salmon twice, close to an opening in the weir left purposely for his accommodation ; but the third time, he ruffled water and merely looked at the fly—a contemptuous indolence marking the lazy effort, as if he meant to insinuate that he repudiated one of the most artistic flies in my collection, as if it had been a Pennsylvanian bond. It was idle to tempt him longer : the ordinary imitation of a butterfly was scornfully rejected ; triple gut was offensive to his eye ; and, as a last resource, I substituted a delicate trout-line, with a couple of diminutive beauties attached thereto, which even a plethoric salmon might fancy on the same principle, that an overgorged alderman, to whom deer and turtle have become abominations, when he can't

manage a woodcock, contents himself with a snipe.

I had hardly effected the exchange, and wetted and stretched my casting-line, when a cloud passed across the sun, and a breeze eddied through the arch, and rippled the pool delightfully. Away went the flies—and as the cast was happily executed, they dropped like thistle-down upon the surface. A salmon, like a lady, sometimes takes strange fancies. Up rose the indolent one—made a dash at the tail-fly—swallowed it—discovered his mistake—and then rushing along the barrier that formed the weir, he carried out, fast as the reel could deliver it, some seventy yards of line. Great delicacy was necessary ; our reliance being in single gut—and a saltation by which, when pricked, he had I suppose intended to effect an instant emancipation, showing him a twelve-pounder, while his arched back and silvery scales* announced

* The change which a salmon undergoes on leaving the sea, and exchanging salt for fresh water, is rapid and remarkable. His silver becomes a dingy red, and the *Lernæ Salmoneæ* which adhered to his skin drop off. An experienced angler will, from the look of the fish, tell almost by what tide he entered the river.

him to be in the full vigour of a direct arrival from the ocean, and a fish that had not as yet experienced the sickening influence of fresh water.

After one or two rapid runs, he sulked and settled himself at the bottom. My ground-gear was too delicate to warrant me in teasing him into action—and my only chance was to play a cautious game. I had a fine clean pool in which to operate, could I but persuade the silver-scaled gentleman to let that remain the field of battle. But the pool had its Scylla and Charybdis. The arches of the bridge were open to him, should he fancy to rush up the river ; and if he rubbed my slight tackle against a buttress, to a dead moral, he would be “ the spoil of me ;” while if the devil put it into his head to make a rush through “ the King’s gap*,” then, indeed, to continue Jack Falstaff’s parlance, I should be regularly “ past praying for.” To prevent this dreadful calamity, Clancy kept the cobble as near the opening in the dam-head as prudence would permit—and as

* *King’s gaps*, are open spaces proscribed by Act of Parliament to be left in weirs and dam-heads, to allow the salmon room to run up and spawn.

the evening was fine, the bridge was crowded with spectators, who looked over the parapet to see how the *set-to* between Mr. Briddawn* and myself would terminate ; and, indeed, they were not long delayed before they witnessed the *finale* of the contest.

Suddenly, my active adversary re-commenced hostilities. After a spring above water of three feet, he rushed at the northern arch of the bridge ; but a stone or two thrown judiciously by an amateur alarmed him, and he turned. As the fancy say, he “had, however, made himself up for mischief,” and finding obstructions presented to his intention of removing up the river—*suadente diabolo*—he resolved at all hazards to run down it. Straight as an arrow, he made directly for the royal gap—and in vain Clancy interposed the cobble to alarm him. At this unhappy moment, a thowel-pin broke short—the punt became unmanageable—and the reel could not take up the line fast enough to obtain command of a fish who seemed determined to run a muck. Down he went over the fall, and, as his Satanic

* The Irish name for a salmon.

Majesty would have it, the punt and my valet followed him. With better fortune, and just as Mr. Clancy entered the King's gap, I made a spring and lighted in safety on the dam-head. As the fall is not more than six feet high, and the water not very deep, Peter's disaster was followed by no worse consequences than a complete drenching, and a roar of laughter from the bridge. The fellow managed to gain the bank, picked up the broken fishing-rod, and joined me on the bridge, whither I had repaired after a marvellous escape from ana-baptism.

On the Borders, the sovereignest thing on earth for all misfortunes, mental or physical, lies in the whiskey-bottle; and as there was a public-house close by, a supply of alcohol was to be obtained, and, consequently, for Mr. Clancy there was balm in Gilead. It being on the Scottish side, Hymen and Bacchus had entered into co-partnership, and made it a temple for the joint-occupancy of their respective votaries; and as two matrimonial artists were resident in Coldstream, Mrs. Mac-Cleverty could obtain either at a call; and, as she averred, it very rarely happened that

one or other of these invaluable gentlemen was not sufficiently sober to rivet the hymeneal fetter.

While the ill-starred attendant and I had been trying conclusions with the salmon, a carriage and four drove up to the Dun Cow, and a gentleman and lady dismounted—the object of their journey being avowedly to commit matrimony. Forthwith a message was despatched for one of the high priests, with especial directions to select the soberer of the twain; and when I and my Hibernian aide-de-camp repaired to the Dun Cow, we learned that the artist had just arrived, and that the love-sick couple were most impatient for the performance of the ceremony. I looked, and with some attention at the personage who was about to tie the indissoluble knot. He bore no external appearance of ascetic severity that I could discover, but, on the contrary, his nose exhibited a rich mulberry tinge, and his dress struck me as not being rigidly canonical. Moreover, the venerable man appeared to me in that comfortable state which, as Mahomet's coffin is said to hang between heaven and earth,

balanced so critically between drunkenness and sobriety, that no man, on corporal oath, if he hesitated to declare that the reverend gentleman was "fou," would venture to assert that he was "fasting."

I had paid the small reckoning at the counter to "the lassie," and was preparing to evacuate the kitchen of this Border caravanserai, when Mrs. MacCleverty issued from an inner chamber, which seemed to be that of state, and beckoned to him with the rubicund nose to enter this sanctum, where the lovers were, with proper delicacy, shrouded from vulgar gaze. The reverend personage obeyed the summons; and as I was turning to depart, the hostess of the Dun Cow requested me to "stop a whee." She was the bearer of a message from the bridegroom elect, to request that I would do him the honour of giving the bride away. "Hughey Tamsan"—which, in common English, meaneth Hugh Thompson—the wright next door, was unfortunately frae hame; but if I would oblige the Captain, the wedding would go off more genteelly. The gentleman was an Irishman, for there was an O before his name. He

had given it to her with his compliments—but troth ! she had jist managed to forget it.

The proposition was embarrassing. I, of the despised order called old bachelors—one, whom no pledge of mutual love had ever blessed—one, whose heart infantine prattle had never delectated, as the smiling cherub in its first short clothes,

“Lisped from its father’s knee,”

those delightful nothings, which glad the parent’s soul,—here was I required to accept *instante* an adult daughter of whose birth, parentage, and education I was profoundly ignorant. Egad ! no. I would be next required I suppose to provide for the issue of the marriage, and therefore determined to decline.

“Would I oblige the Captain ?”

That question was put happily by the hostess. There is freemasonry among gentlemen of the sword. We were of the same order ; and would I see a brother of the blade inconvenienced ? Blood is thicker than water ; there was an *O* before his name ; we were both Emeralders of course ; and, by the Lord !

were it only for the honour of "the ould country," I could not, for the life of me, say no. I assented; and Mrs. MacCleverty conducted me to the shrine of Hymen—the same shrine having a small window, an old-fashioned clock, a bed in one corner, and a cag of whiskey in the other.

As I entered, the proprietor of the fair fugitive politely advanced to meet me; but, when in the centre of the room, he came to a dead halt, and shading his eyes with his hand looked at me with fixed attention.

"Arrah! Hector, jewel, is that yourself?" drawled out a voice, in which surprise and uncertainty were united. In return, I took advantage of the better light the stranger stood in to reconnoitre his outward man; and, by everything hymeneal! in the candidate for the holy estate, I recognized my old fellow subaltern in the gallant 88th—Fitzgerald O'Boyle!

"It is myself, my dear Fitz—your friend in auld lang syne, and, if I understand the landlady, your father-in-law at present."

"Oh murder! was there ever such luck! My darling girl, let me introduce you to an

old acquaintance, and one for whom I have the tenderest regard. This is my bosom friend and an *ould* Peninsular—glory to the name! though they're out of fashion now-a-days: God be with the time when we slept under the same tree—ay! and marched afterward eight and forty hours, on a ration that would scarce have satisfied a snipe.”

I saluted the lady. She was, indeed, a very pretty girl, and Fitz was flattered at my approbation. The man with the rubicund nose hinted that the sooner matters were made safe the better. Witnesses were accordingly brought in—and in five minutes, Captain Ignacius Fitzgerald O'Boyle, and Maria Alexandrina Figgins were declared to be lawfully united.

Evening was shutting in, when we took our departure from the Dun Cow for the hotel at Cornhill, whither I had despatched my faithful follower to order supper, and apartments for the happy pair. On reaching the inn, all was in full preparation; and while the travellers are repairing the toilet damages incident to a hurried journey, and the waiter is laying the cloth, I'll tell the reader, and in a few words, who were this amorous couple.

The gallant Captain was a younger scion of the O'Boyles of Cloonamuddagh. Theirs was an ancient lineage—and they once possessed extensive estates. From time to time, the property had been gradually disposed of; and the lands now attached to the lordship of Cloonamuddagh were much broader than productive. For four generations, a pack of fox-hounds and an open house had kept the owner, for the time being, in constant trouble—and a contested election, in which the present proprietor had nearly proved successful, relieved the aspirant after parliamentary honours from the trouble of receiving his rents—the Lord Chancellor having very kindly obliged him with a deputy. Fitz, the third son of this last gentleman, was a stout soldier and a steady friend—rather inclined to quarrel in his own person, but a man who delighted to accommodate the differences of others—a task in which he had been eminently successful. His face was truly Milesian—his figure unobjectionable for a flanker—his address easy and assured—his age verging upon twenty-seven. Wherever he went, the women hailed his advent—while the men read with un-

disguised satisfaction, the name of Captain Fitzgerald O'Boyle, in the list of fashionable departures. It was said that the gallant Captain was rather successful with the softer sex—indeed, that he was a sort of Hibernian Cæsar who conquered when he came—at sight.

“And now, my dear Fitz,” I said as he returned to the supper-room, “will you let me know who my pretty daughter is?”

“Faith! and that's the least I can do for your civility in adopting her,” replied Captain O'Boyle.

“I need not tell you, my dear Hector,” he continued, “that so long as I can remember anything, we were always tight up at Cloonamuddagh—and the worst was, we had no means of pulling in. To break up the kennel, would have broken my father's heart; and the *ceade fealteeagh** that for three centuries opened the house to every devil from the corners of the earth, who chose to drop in with a ‘God save all here,’ was not, as you know, in Ireland to be interrupted. That

* Hundred welcomes.

infernal election, however, was a regular wind-up. Only for it, we might have gone on 'cooling and supping' as they say, and by robbing Peter to pay Paul, kept the hall-door open; but down came a Chancery decree—the estates were put under a receiver—and the consequence was, that we were ruined totally.

"I was going down to Greenwood and Cox's to draw a trifle I had there, when who should I meet in the Strand but Matt Fortescue. Being both of us in trouble, we dropped naturally enough into the Ship for mutual consolation."

"'You heard, Matt,' says I, 'of the receiver?'"

"'And you heard, Naty,' said he in return, 'of my affliction?'"

"'I read it in the Times,' says I. Now Matt's wife, a draper's widow, whom he had picked up ten years before in Brighton, had slipped her cable suddenly; and as her jointure went along with her, she was very sincerely lamented.

"'I moved,' said Matt, 'from private lodgings in Margate into a boarding-house to drown

sorrow in society—and faith ! I think I could have replaced my irreparable loss, only that poor, dear, lamented Mrs. F—, is only sodded a week yesterday.’

“ ‘And who may be the lady ?’ I inquired.

“ ‘Oh ! a widow,’ says he, ‘they’re the safest by far, as ye can before you come to house-keeping, know all about them for a shilling at Doctor’s Commons.’

“ ‘Well, Matt, you must only lie by until a decent period to indulge in sorrow has elapsed.’

“ ‘Arrah, my dear fellow !’ returned the afflicted widower, ‘Mrs. Boothby, as they call her, will never hold out another month. Why she’s only there a couple of days, and she is already making eyes at a swell-mob-looking fellow across the table. But is it not a melancholy thing to see a middle-aged gentlewoman, with eight hundred a year, going to throw herself away upon a lisping cockney, who, as they tell me, manufactures marking ink.’

“ ‘Very sad, indeed,’ I replied. ‘I suppose that a long period of bereavement has at last subdued her sorrow for the dear departed. Who was he, Matt ?’

“ ‘The devil—Christ pardon us for calling a dead man out of his name!—kept a cake shop in the Minories, and he was planted a couple of months ago. Would you be inclined to put your *comether** on the widow?’ ”

“ ‘And become successor to a pastry-cook, and serve tarts, I suppose, across the counter! No, no, my dear Matt. Bad as matters are at Cloonamuddaugh, they never could stand lollypops and spiced ginger-bread.’ ”

“ ‘Oh, murder!’ exclaimed Fortescue. ‘She’ll drop into the hands of one of the most superlative snobs that ever set foot in a Margate steamer. But, come down. What between cliff walks, and St. Peter’s Gardens, we’ll get over a week or two. Meet me in the morning at London Bridge; and who knows what luck’s before us? And may be, after all, the devil would stand our friend.’ ”

“ In this pious reliance Mr. Fortescue took his leave, and I promised to be punctual and meet him at the wharf. True to my appointment, I was at the bridge in good time—and forthwith

* An Irish expression, meaning to gain the affections of a lady.

embarked my person among a crowd of snobbish men and noisy women.

: “While Matt was carefully inspecting every female passenger on whose garments he could detect an inch of crape, I had discovered an interesting girl seated near the wheel, engaged in netting a silk purse, and apart from all the company. Struck with her appearance, I took a vacant seat beside her, and an accidental civility in picking up her reticule afforded an opportunity of entering into conversation. As I had suspected, she was voyaging alone to join her aunt at Ramsgate; a cousin who had promised to escort her down the river, having been suddenly obliged by urgent business to forego the anticipated pleasure.

: “I found her artless and conversable; and I flatter myself that she felt that she had a gentleman beside her, and accordingly availed herself of my protection. I conducted her to the saloon when dinner was announced; and, as young men in want of a situation express it in the ‘Times,’ made myself ‘generally useful.’ Nor was honest Matt, to do him justice, throwing time away—for he had commenced the sentimental with a stout gentle-

woman in second mourning, whom, Heaven knows how, he had discovered to be the relict of a West End boot-maker who had kicked the bucket a twelvemonth back, leaving to the fair and fat one an easy independence, the stock in trade, and a house at Putney.

“But this was not the only information that Mr. Fortescue had managed to pick up; for after dinner, when we had resumed our seats on deck, Matt whispered in my ear,

“‘By the powers of pewter! Hector jewel, you have the biggest heiress between this and Ramsgate at your side. Don’t spare soft solder for the love of God! The Lord be praised!—I’m doing pretty well myself, and with the assistance of the Blessed Virgin, I’ll change Mother Gilbert’s name to Fortescue within a fortnight.’

“When we ranged along the pier at Ramsgate, upon my soul! I was over head and ears in love, and I had a shrewd suspicion that my little civilities had not failed in making a favourable impression. As the evening was fine, Ramsgate had poured forth its cockney population—and conspicuous above the crowd, appeared a portly gentlewoman with a brace of

cocked hatted attendants at her side, whom the pretty companion of my voyage apprized me was her honoured aunt—to wit, the Lady Mayoress.

“ I won’t detain you, my dear Hector, with my course of love ; but harp-lessons, libraries, and donkey-riding gave me the necessary opportunities of pressing my suit in secret. From some unknown cause, my lady-aunt took alarm. Maria was the *fiancée* of her only son, and by a union of the cousins, the wealth of both families would be concentrated. Hitherto, the fair orphan had heard that such an alliance was contemplated with indifference ; but now, to make assurance doubly sure, preparations in the shape of settlements were commenced, and an early day was named for the celebration of the marriage. But another spirit had come over the young lady’s dream—and for the first time she demurred to the arrangements, and steadily objected to immediate matrimony. The Lady Mayoress pressed her wishes with more zeal than discretion, while I urged disobedience with better taste and more effect. Love eventually came off triumphant—and here we are, my dear father and quondam comrade, securely riveted,

after leaving Ramsgate in an uproar, and as I suppose, placing the Mansion House in a state of mourning."

As he ended his narrative, the fair fugitive appeared, supper was served ; and as wayfarers require rest, we retired at an early hour. In an hour, the inn was silent as La Trappe ; the travellers no doubt were sleeping, or, at least they ought to have been so. My dreams were piscatorial—and, in fancy, I was again engaged with my successful antagonist, who had left me lamenting at the bridge. I slept soundly, and was in the very act of landing the exhausted salmon, when the opening of my chamber door, and the flash of candles through the curtains dispelled my dreams, and in marvellous surprise, I started bolt upright in the bed—for the room was filled with company.

"I demand my disobedient niece," exclaimed a stout gentlewoman, in a purple pelisse and a towering passion.

"Give up my misguided ward," continued a very apoplectic-looking personage with a pursy voice.

"And I insist upon having my affianced wife, instantler," screamed a lean young man,

who seemed tolerably well advanced in a galloping consumption.

"And where the devil am I to find misguided wards and disobedient nieces?" I furiously returned.

"Oh! you wicked middle-aged man," roared the stout gentlewoman; "to run away with—"

"I deny the charge, Madam, I was the person *ran away with*. A malicious minded salmon carried my casting line over a dam-head, and took a vagabond called Clancy, through the King's gap, I suppose to keep it company."

"And are you not married?" continued the lady in the purple pelisse.

"I am not, Madam; and if you have anything matrimonial to propose, I would hint that the drawing-room would be the discreeter place wherein to make your hymeneal overtures."

Now, profiting by the delay which the waiter had dexterously occasioned, by misdirecting the midnight intruders, and sending them into an apartment that was not the right one, Captain O'Boyle had time to make a hurried toilet, and finding that his citadel would be immediately

assailed, like an able General, he determined to anticipate the attack. Arrayed in dressing-gown and slippers, and with a bed-room candle in his hand, with matchless effrontery he glided into my chamber, and innocently inquired the reason : " Why his bride should be alarmed, and his own repose interrupted at this unseasonable hour ?" In a moment, the lady recognized him as the real Simon Pure, and a desperate *mélée* of "question fierce, and proud reply," followed. The lady stormed : the younger gentleman swore he would dissolve the marriage ; and the older inquired, whether Captain O'Boyle would ever venture to appear in London after insulting its authorities in his person, and also begged to know in what way he, the said Captain, intended to satisfy the Lord Chancellor ? Captain O'Boyle, in return, passed the lady by in silence, called Mr. Theodore Figgins a snob, consigned the Corporation, root and branch, to Pandemonium, and expressed his readiness to give satisfaction to the Keeper of the Great Seal, wherever and whenever the occupant of the woolsack should demand it. I took advantage of a lull—and being altogether innocent in all matters touching the abduction

of the heiress, requested and obtained an audience.

“ My good people, as a person altogether disinterested, will you favour me for a few minutes with a hearing? Without discussing the indiscretion of the young lady, or the impudence of that bashful gentleman with the bedroom candlestick in his hand, I must state, as an eye-witness, that the ceremony has been legally performed—that the parties are living under this roof as man and wife—that death alone can sever the existing union, and, in a word, the mischief is completed. I have reason to believe that, between the fair fugitive and her husband, in point of wealth, there is a marked disparity upon his side. As a gentleman, none can moot Captain O’Boyle’s claims to that title, if an ancient lineage, and an honourable career in arms, are held sufficient. Nay, permit me to go farther—the proudest lady in the land need not blush to rest upon the arm of a man who crowned the breach at Rodrigo, and tried the temper of Irish steel with the Imperial Guard at Fuentes. Let me act, on this occasion, the part of mediator. In that sweet face,” and I looked at Mrs. Figgins, who had once

been a city belle, "I see beauty and beneficence combined. She would pardon, rather than upbraid; and would she but retire to the bridal-chamber, I am sure the crime of love would have only to be confessed and forgiven."

After a little demur, the Lady Mayoress assented, and even accepted the escort of the abductor of her niece.

"And now, gentlemen," I continued, addressing myself to the worthy Alderman and his heir apparent, "no doubt a long and rapid journey, such as you have just performed, has been attended with personal inconvenience—"

"Inconvenience!" exclaimed the ruler of the modern Babylon, "nothing, for six and thirty hours, but hurry-scurry. Not a regular meal—not one moment allowed to promote digestion, since we quitted the stones! What I ate, where I ate, and when I ate, I could not pretend to guess."

And the Alderman sighed bitterly.

"*Rem acu*," I observed, "the very butt I aimed at. In this house—I declare it on the word of a Christian man, and also a Companion of the Bath—they are unrivalled at salmon-

cutlets and brandered chickens. They have a fish at present in the larder, that at twilight was disporting in the Tweed; and if you will allow me the honour of presiding for this night, I will forfeit a quarter's half-pay, if I do not parade a supper worthy even of a Lord Mayor himself."

My invitation was gratefully accepted. I made a hasty toilet, and reached the eating-room in time to receive Mrs. Figgins, who confessed that Maria's tears had conquered, and that the fugitives were forgiven.

After breakfast next morning—at which the happy couple appeared and where their pardon was duly ratified—while the carriage was being brought round, the Alderman called the gallant Captain to the window:

"You gentlemen of the sword," he said, addressing my bashful camarado, "are generally warmer in the heart than in the pocket. This," and he placed a cheque for £500 in the Captain's hand, "is a trifle for a tour. Don't return to town until this nine days' wonder has blown over. I shall be laughed at, I expect, for letting £80,000 slip from my family. But no matter—Theodore will have enough

without it. And as the prize was fated to pass to a stranger, I rejoice that a stout soldier was the winner."

The carriage came round: the Figgins family departed. As the day was dark and breezy, Mr. Clancy was in attendance. Leaving the happy fugitives to bill and coo, I headed, with my swarthy companion, to "silver Tweed," marvelling at the singular luck by which an Irish gentleman, *quocunque jeceris*, manages to drop upon his legs!

On my return with a fresh-run salmon, and a creel of trouts, a note from my loving countryman intimated that he had started to visit "fair Melease" with his blooming bride.

CHAPTER VII.

LEGEND OF NORHAM KIRK-YARD.

WITHIN the range of the antiquated artillery which had once armed the mouldering walls of Norham Castle, the remains of a large mansion-house may yet be traced—for being built chiefly of the ashlers taken from the dismantled fortress, from their size and the solidity of the building, they have partially resisted the hand of time. The appearance of the house has been forgotten—but tradition says that it was erected on a scale much too extensive for the resources of the founder; and with profuse hospitality and a fancy for dabbling with politics—at that time a matter more unsafe and expensive than at present—the ruin of Ralph

Fenwick had been effected. Certain it is, that being out in "the forty-five" added to his activity in "the fifteen," drew down such fines and forfeitures, that the last remnant of his lands, and the very roof that sheltered him, passed consequently, into the hands of a stranger,—and no one at the time knew whom.

Fenwick had an only child—a daughter named Helen—as remarkable for her personal beauty, as for a bold and masculine spirit. She had unfortunately lost her mother when an infant, and a temper that required maternal control to have checked its violence in early youth, through the ill-judging indulgence of a fond father, was suffered to run riot and become at last irreclaimable. At the time that her father's ruin was consummated, Helen Fenwick was only twenty-two,—but handsome as she was, she still remained unwedded. It was said that none had sought her hand save one—he was a cadet of a noble house—a title since attainted; and having been out with the young Chevalier, he was obliged to quit the kingdom, and enter a foreign service, where rumour asserted he had perished on the

field. Helen Fenwick loved young Morton with an ardour that might be well imagined in one afflicted with a wild and impetuous spirit like her own ; and when tidings of her lover's death reached the Border, she put on mourning, and swore secretly that her heart should never be transferred to another.

It was late in the evening, and snow was falling fast, when the ruined laird, and her who might be termed a widowed daughter, were seated at either side of a blazing wood fire, on which both gazed in listless but melancholy silence. News had arrived that day, in the slow course with which intelligence the reached the Tweed-side from London, that the purchaser of Fenwick's property would speedily arrive to claim and take possession. The old Borderer poured the remainder of a flask of red wine into his goblet—drained it to the bottom—and with a heavy sigh expressed curiosity to know to whom his property had passed.

“That you'll know over soon, I fancy,” replied his daughter, as she raised her eyes from the blazing logs, and cast a mingled look

of pity and reproach upon him, whose improvidence and folly had entailed poverty upon both.

At that moment, the tramp of horses' feet was heard without—and presently, the only male attendant of a once large establishment entered the chamber to announce that a stranger had arrived, and required a night's lodging.

“It is the last which Ralph Fenwick will have it in his power to bestow, and say that he is welcome.”

“He is not welcome!” exclaimed his fiery daughter. “Say that the family are not inclined to receive company at present. There is a change-house at Norham—and the ride is but half a mile.”

While these contradictory orders were being delivered, the stranger, who seemed to stand on scanty ceremony, had followed the domestic, and was standing in the doorway; and now advancing with assurance to the fire, he exclaimed, as he coolly shook the snow from his riding cloak,

“Gramercy! fair lady, for your kind advice,

which I pray your excuse for not following, notwithstanding. A man who finds himself in his own hall on a snowy night, methinks, would show but little wit to leave it in the dark to seek a strange hostelrie."

The eyes of the father and daughter were instantly turned on the intruder; and while Fenwick gazed on the new proprietor with a subdued look, Helen's darkened glance ran over the stranger from head to foot with haughty indifference. All unabashed with his cold reception, the wayfarer removed his slouched hat, hung his cloak quietly on a peg, drew a chair before the fire, and having seated himself, he stretched his heavy riding boots towards the hearth, like a man determined not only to make himself perfectly at home, but also to afford ample opportunity to any one who felt inclined to make a personal investigation of his outer man.

The appearance of the stranger was not particularly favourable. He was a stout, clumsy, vulgar style of man, with a commonplace face, bronzed by exposure to a tropic sun, and pitted deeply with pock-marks. His age

might be sixty, or probably a year or two beyond it. His manners were coarse, his bearing rude, and his ease unlike that of a man of gentle birth.

"Helen," said the ruined laird, "get supper and a flask of wine—and see that a chamber be prepared for this gentleman."

"We *must* do so, I presume," was the lady's uncourteous answer. "It shall be done, father, but with a sorry welcome."

"Nay," said the stranger, as he laid his hand upon the fair one's arm, when she rose to execute her parent's order. "By the mass! a strapping wench. Muster thy good humour, lassie. A house, you know, will need a mistress—and who can say but I might wive thee as well as another."

"Wife!" she repeated with a laugh of scorn, as she flung his arm aside. "An thou wert better-favoured, and I lacked a grandsire, I might choose thee, possibly. But, God's mercy! a wife! Ha! ha! ha! I cannot forbear a laugh when I hear an old man speak such folly!" and so saying, she hurried from the room.

The purchaser of Fenwick's forfeited estate called himself Hugh Robson. His extraction was the humblest. His father had been a tailor, and he himself saw the light first in the garret of a mean house in one of the overcrowded alleys of ancient London. He was a wild and profligate youth—and before he reached sixteen, had several times been in the hands of justice. The probability is strong, that his career would have been briefly and disgracefully closed, had not accident interposed between him and the gallows. He was kidnapped—then a commonplace occurrence—and sent to the plantations. There he became a slave-driver, buccaneered a little, and at last managed to induce a planter's widow to marry him, and through her became a man of property. On her decease, he sold the slaves and plantation, and returned with the money he had thus realized to England. Such was the personage who had claimed the hospitality of the unthrifty Borderer, and received such welcome as we have described.

A few days passed. Ralph Fenwick's affairs were wound up; and it was ascertained that he was reduced to abject poverty. The springs of

human action are at times incomprehensible. From the moment that Robson had seen the haughty beauty, he determined that she should become his wife; and, strange as it may appear, her scorn and contempt served but to confirm his resolution. In his own rude manner, he urged his suit—the inducement being a liberal settlement. The offer was disdainfully rejected. He spoke to Helen's father—proposed to place him in his alienated property for life; and, to a ruined man, held out powerful considerations to enlist his mediation, that with Fenwick he perfectly succeeded. What could have been his object in obtaining the hand of a woman who evidently despised him remains a mystery. Could it be that he was ambitious of mingling the puddle in his own veins with the red blood of the Border; or, from a mere perversity of will, overcome an opposition to wishes which he had secretly determined should be gratified? Whatever was the influencing motive, Hugh Robson persevered—and he succeeded.

The night before Helen gave a reluctant consent, old Mabel, her nurse, was closeted with her young mistress.

"Tak him, my bonny ohild. Your lover's in a bluidy grave, and a' will come round again wi' yer feyther. The ill-faced carl canna ootlast twa or three years at maist. His heart's burned up in the Indies; and when he dees, ye'll be but a youthfu' widda; and wi' broad lands and muckle siller, ye may ha' the brawest lad upon the Border."

Whether parental affection, or the prospect of an early widowhood and jointured lands prevailed, Helen Fenwick consented to accept a man she not only despised, but hated.

On the morning her assent was formally given to this infelicitous union, Robson and her father waited her decision in the hall. With a haughty step she entered the apartment, and advancing towards the bridegroom in expectancy, she thus addressed him:

"I am come," she said, "to signify my consent, but I will at the same time deal candidly with you. My heart is sleeping in the grave with the only man I loved; but had it never warmed for another, to you it should be dead. Now, thus forewarned, are you desirous to obtain this hand?"

The infatuated man muttered an assent.

"Then in the devil's name be it yours!" and flinging it to him, she continued: "The bargain is complete, and the sooner the lawyer and priest enact their parts, the better."

So saying, she hurried from the room.

Never was a union more ominously contracted—for an impending storm burst at the very moment she named the enemy of man, and a thunderbolt struck a chimney from the mansion. The settlements were drawn up, the ceremonial was performed, and Helen, nominally, became a wife. Instead of responding to the ritual, in which love and obedience were demanded of her, she answered with a haughty bow; and ere the first week had passed over, she insisted on occupying a separate apartment.

Calamity followed fast upon this unholy marriage. The morn, surnamed the honey one, "had not yet filled her horns," when in attempting to cross the Tweed when flooded, her father and the horse he rode, were swept down the angry stream and perished in her sight. Had her hand been sacrificed on his account, it now

was unavailing. Possibly she thought so, and felt her association with Robson more intolerable than before. She wedded—a union it could not be called—for save when they met at table, they lived as much apart as before the mockery of marriage had been undergone.

Two circumstances were mortifying to Hugh Robson. Like most men who spring into unexpected wealth, he was desirous to found a family, and leave a male heir behind him; but the unnatural terms on which he and his wayward lady lived, forbade that hope entirely. The other cause of annoyance was wounded pride. He was richer than any of the neighbouring gentlemen by far, and solicitous to display his wealth, and exhibit his hospitality; but under one plea or other, his entertainments were but thinly attended—while several of the old Border families declined visiting with him altogether. These matters added fuel to the fire at home; his wife in name, grew daily more intractable—his caresses were repulsed with loathing—his entreaties were heard with a cold ear—until at last, a naturally bad temper, brutalized afterwards by a long familiarity with the heartless

cruelty he had resorted to when a negro-driver, led him in a fit of passion to threaten his wayward wife with personal chastisement. But little did he yet know the indomitable spirit he had to deal with, for ere the words had passed his lips, Helen sprang from the chair she sat on, and fearlessly crossed the apartment to the place he stood.

"Villain!" she cried, "that threat alone was wanting to place thy character in its true light. What! and thou wouldst flog me, God sooth! as thou erstwhile flayed thy blacks. See ye that hand?" and she extended her finely-rounded arm, until her fingers had nearly met his. "Touch but that hand, and by every hope I hold of Heaven, I'll sheath this dagger in your heart."

Robson was brutal, cruel, and daring, but not brave; and the glittering poignard she had plucked from her bosom, but still more her excited attitude and flashing eyes, terrified the quondam slave-driver. The challenged pressure of her hand was not accepted—and after standing a minute with an arm extended in the fixed attitude of a statue, she coolly replaced the

dagger in her breast, and turning away in contemptuous silence, left the hall.

A week elapsed, and to every request to join the board at dinner-hour, a contemptuous refusal had been returned—but on the eighth evening, an incident occurred which brought on a domestic tragedy. At night-fall, a stranger and his groom stopped at the hall, and knocking at the door, requested hospitality. Right willingly Hugh Robson proceeded to welcome the unknown guest, while he despatched a female servant to his refractory wife, to announce the unexpected arrival, and for that night only, he implored her to grace the supper-table with her presence.

“Tell him,” said she, “that we never sit at the same board; that—but hold! a sudden impulse urges me. I will accept the invitation, ay, were it to be the last one. Tell Janet to come here—I must needs, God sooth! to mend my dress a little.”

In five minutes the tire-woman appeared, and with the liberty which a favourite domestic will occasionally assume, she insisted on a total alteration in the toilet.

"May I never be married—and Heaven knows, unless it were a happier one than thine, lady, I would pray that I should die unwedded—the noblest stranger I have looked on for many a day is standing at the hall fire."

"What looks he, Janet?"

"A soldier, and a bold one," was the maid's reply.

"His age, girl?"

"Thirty, in appearance; but, as I think, in reality five years younger," said the attendant.

"Is he tall or short?"

"He stands a full head over Mr. Robson."

"Fish! name him not; describe the stranger."

"Tall, slight, sinewy; eyes and hair jet-black, an arching brow, a thin moustache, teeth white as pearl, and the deepest voice I ever listened to, and, yet the while, a sweet one," returned the tire-woman.

"Could the grave give up its dead, I would say that it was Reginald himself. Oh, no, no! death's harvest is always safely gathered in, and he whom I only loved, or ever could love, is sleeping in unbroken rest. Were it only to

recall the memory of the dead by the similitude of the living, I will to the hall—ay, and fire me bravely ; I would look well even to him who bore the slightest semblance to Reginald Morton.”

Arrayed in a rich deep mourning-dress, which best becomes a fine woman as men say, the lady descended to the hall. The door was open, and the stranger was standing before the fire with his back turned to the entrance. He seemed buried in deep thought, for the rustling of the lady's silken robe did not attract his notice until, when within a yard or two, she pronounced the customary words of welcome. The stranger started, and turned round. Saints and devils ! it was not a mere semblance of the long lost lover—but Reginald Morton himself !

Wonder and shame struck the proud lady dumb, and the stranger preserved a contemptuous silence. At this embarrassing moment, Robson suddenly returned.

“ I pray thee, fair sir,” he said, hurriedly, “ to excuse me for some ten minutes. A messenger from Edinburgh has brought me an important paper, which must be signed and delivered in the

court there before noon to-morrow. I leave thee to the care of my lady wife. Helen, the gentleman will find yon flask of Burgundy indifferent good. Pledge his good health till I return."

He said, and was hastily leaving the chamber, when in passing a huge deer-hound of uncommon beauty that belonged to the stranger, Robson placed his hand on the dog's head. A sudden snap betrayed the hound's displeasure.

"Confound thee!" exclaimed the host; "thy teeth are sharp ones," and he hastened from the hall.

"And art thou living, Reginald?" were the first words the humbled beauty uttered.

"As certainly alive, as thou art a lady wife," and the reply was ironically delivered.

"Reginald!" returned the dame in a subdued voice, "they said that thou hadst fallen on the battle-field, and I mourned for thee."

"Until another came to comfort thee. Gad's life! I cannot compliment thee honestly on thy selection, Helen. I marvel no more that woman's fancies have been ever held unaccountable. Why thou hast mated with one

whom poor Kilbuck there," and he pointed to the deer-hound, "disdained to make acquaintance with."

On hearing his own name pronounced, the dog approached his master, and laid his wiry muzzle on his hand.

"Ay, honest Kilbuck, were I away a century, and thou couldst live so long, did I return, I would find *thee* faithful."

"Reginald!" exclaimed the lady, as tears rolled down her cheeks, "if thou wouldst kill me, use daggers, but don't speak them!" and she took the stranger's hand, who passively allowed it to remain in the grasp of her whom he had once loved so faithfully, and muttered thus:

"And was it for this that Reginald Morton's steed was foremost in the charge? Ay, he wanted fame, to share it with her from whom fortune for a time had parted him. Was it for this he crowned the breach at Breda? He wanted wealth, and the heavy purse of gold that rewarded the boldest adventurer was given him. Was it for this, when fame was won and name had been acquired, he overcame his dislike to

the reigning dynasty, and accepted a command from the house of Hanover? Helen, I am master of five hundred golden coins. Not one of them was earned but with the red blood of these veins. I have won a name, and thou shouldst have shared it. Had I found thee destitute, I would have clasped thee closer to my heart; ay, even hadst thou been honestly widowed, former love might have pleaded in thy favour, and even in that case, I might have made thee mine. But wedding as thou didst—mating with yon churl, for dross, mere dross—oh! 'tis disgusting! But no more, my say is said; I came only to tell thee, that whilst thou wert false, that I was faithful. Fare thee well, Helen, mayst thou be happier than I."

"Thou wouldst not go!" exclaimed the lady, passionately. "What, depart without rest or food?"

"Food!" said the stranger, and his dark moustache curled in contempt. "Sit at the same board, and eat the bread of Helen Fenwick's lord. By the true Lord, the first morsel would choke me dead! But, lady, I will not leave thee uncourteously," he said, and approached

the table, filled a goblet to the brim with Burgundy, pledged health and happiness to the dame, and drained it to the bottom.

“And now, honest Kilbuck, we will wend our way, as we have done for years, together. I would not touch thy lips, Helen—the carl’s mayhap had pressed them ere I entered. I’ll wring the hand that once was pledged to me—and now God sain thee !”

Fixed in the attitude of mute despair—in-capable of motion as the marble effigy which decks some royal tomb—Helen saw him whom she only loved depart, and made no effort to detain him. She listened as the hall-door closed—she heard horse-tramps pass the window. “He is gone !” was her only remark, and taking a taper from the side-board she left the hall.

CHAPTER VIII.

GREAT was Mr. Robson's astonishment and dismay, when on despatching the courier and his despatches, he found a deserted chamber, and stranger, dog, and mistress gone. Besides a lost guest and a levanted lady, he had, however, other causes for uneasiness. The hound's teeth had penetrated his finger till they met—and in the vulgar belief of the day, he dreaded should the dog at any future time be rabid, that, as a matter of course, he too, would madden. He sought to learn the cause of this sudden departure, but the anxious inquiries he addressed through her tire-woman, were answered very unsatisfactorily; and were, at last, concluded by an imperious order, that no farther messages should be sent her. She waived her hand—desired to be left alone till morning—the attendant obeyed the order—the chamber door was

locked—and the proud and wretched dame was left to commune with herself.

“And is he, indeed, living?” she said as she paced the chamber. “Ay! living as certain as I am wedded. And he won gold for me—gold, with his own red blood. He won glory on the battle-field, and he would have shared it with me. Were I in poverty, he would have sheltered me in his bosom, and I believe him. Had I been widowed—honestly, he added—early love would have pleaded in extenuation for—”

She stopped suddenly—the devil suggested the thought—her brows contracted till they met.

“Ha! Reginald! thou shalt yet be wedded to the widow!”

* * * *

The age of superstition was not yet over, and many a trace of old and contemptible fancies still remained among the Borderers. One prevalent belief was, that certain diseases might be remedied or averted by spells and planatory influence. The terrible effects which too frequently follow the bite of a rabid dog, were among those that were considered thus curable; and while the only means which reason and experience point out were neglected, namely,

excision with the knife or cautery immediately applied, charms were foolishly resorted to ; and, of course, if the poison had been communicated, the patient fell a sacrifice to popular fallacy. Mr. Robson's accident was bruited over the country—and a mysterious colouring was thrown over the unfortunate transaction by the sudden disappearance of the dog who had inflicted the bite, and the personage who owned him.

In the application of supernatural agencies to remedy human diseases, a beldame, named Meg Gormly, was reputed to be eminently skilful, and Robson was easily prevailed upon to send for and consult her. Ruined as the Fenwick family had been, they still were held in honourable recollection ; and when wealth, acquired by her unhappy alliance, had enabled her to accomplish it, a number of retainers whom the altered fortunes of her father had thrown on the world to shift as they best could, were again taken into service by the daughter of the deceased Jacobite. The whole of the establishment were the fosterers and followers of the old house—and among them, Robson was looked upon as an intruder—while a whispered wish of his haughty

lady would have commanded their devoted obedience.

That Meg Gormly had been summoned was instantly communicated to Robson's lady—and an order was issued that the old woman on her arrival, should be first introduced to herself, before she saw the patient. It was done; and in the haze of an autumnal evening, the wise-woman was conducted to the lady's private chambers. The figures, but not the faces of the sorceress and Robson's wife were visible.

"Is the door closed?" was the opening question.

"It is, noble dame," was the reply.

"Then step forward, and stand between me and the oriel."

Meg Gormly obeyed an order she felt to be imperious, and placed herself between the lady and the window.

"Is thy memory good?"

"Thank God, sight and sense fail me not," said the person thus addressed.

"Then thou canst possibly remember, some ten years syne, when the stupid villagers had set thee to swim within a horsepond for a witch, and when thou wert half-drowned—

couldst thou recal to memory the name of him who saved thee from the rabble, and had thee restored to life?"

"Right weel, lady; quiet to his ashes! It was thine honoured father."

"And wouldst thou repay life preserved?"

"Ay, marry, would I; and that right willingly."

"My Lord—pish!—he, I mean, to whom I am wedded, is bitten by a dog. They fear the beast was rabid."

"Oh, then, honoured lady, can I not give thee comfort! I am here the messenger of blessed news. But yesterday, when returning from the moors, on a lonely hill-path which leads amongst the Cheviots, and is never ridden but by sportsmen, and in auld lang syne by better men, I mean the moss-troopers, I encountered a young gallant. His presence was right noble; his horse would cost a hundred crowns; but the noblest beast I ever looked upon, was the deer-hound that trotted by his side. As he rode up I asked a charity; he reigned his courser up, flung me a tester; but the best news is to come—his was the hound that bit your noble lord, and while he searched

his pouch for the piece o' siller, the gallant hound walked into the pool, lapped the water plentifully, and then rowed himself in the burnie until his vara ears were wetted. No fear o' him, I trow: the dog's as sound a dog as ony in wide Brittain. Is na' that blythe news, leddy?"

"No; by the God of Heaven! the worst I have heard since rumour brought to the Border the death of Reginald Morton. Hark ye, woman! these rooms are quiet, but this closet is still more secure. Follow me," she said; and led the way.

The room was small and dark; evening had totally closed in; and the time, the place, the light, were in good keeping with the interview that followed. The door was scarcely closed, until the fiery descendant of a fiery race, rushed to the all-engrossing object that occupied her mind.

"Meg Gormly," she commenced.

"Good, my lady; I listen with attention."

"My father saved thee from—"

"Drooning in a horse-pond," said the sybil.

"His daughter can guerdon thee with what will make thy old age comfortable. What

would'st thou do to pay the father's debt, and win the daughter's gratitude?"

"Ony gude service I could render," was the reply.

"Short then be it. The hound thou met yesterday was mad—remember that!—rabid mad. The knight called out to thee to avoid him—remember that! His eyes flashed fire—his tongue was foaming; and when he saw the stream, he would not cross the water, until the knight, his master, rode a mile further to the bridge—all these remember! Drop them out by turns to thy patient; and visit me here returning from him. Thou know'st thy course of leech-craft now—enough, at least, to guide thee for the present—and more hereafter."

The old pretender to "arts that none may name," bowed and was departing.

"Back!" cried the lady, suddenly, "one word before we separate. Meg Gormly, my father saved thee from the horse-pond;—play but the daughter false, and may a heavy curse light on the name of Fenwick, if Tweed will drown, or faggot burn—thou know'st my meaning; and thy weal or woe rests with thyself. And now to thy patient."

Whether the murderous task thus unexpectedly confided to her jumped with her own truculent disposition, gratitude for a rescued life, or the prospect of a comfortable provision for old age now fast drawing on, whatever the cause was which influenced the foul beldame, Gormly entered into the affair left to her sole management with zeal and devilish ability. With the semblance of quieting her patient's apprehensions, she confirmed him in the belief that he had been bitten by a rabid animal; and instead of administering sedatives, she stimulated the doomed man to partial insanity, by dispensing irritating drugs in ardent spirits. On the third morning after she had commenced her leechcraft, Mr. Robson was decidedly attacked with the mania attendant upon drunkenness, called by mediciners, *delirium tremens*; and it was duly announced by Gormly to her employer. Was the hour come for this desperate, bad woman to carry out her infernal purpose? To invade the house of life, coolly and advisedly, requires more determination than usually is given to individuals, and bold as Helen Fenwick was, she hesitated; but accident removed her scruples, and sealed her husband's fate.

Gormly, from time to time, visited her patroness, and communicated the successful progress of his disease.

“ He is mad—down-right mad—honoured dame ; and might I be so forward as to advise one so much abler than mysel’, a visit would be weel, an’ a little shew o’ grief along wi’ it. He winna ken ye, or ony body, for he’s ravin sair.”

“ Ha ! by’r lady, well counselled. Come, lead the way, and I will follow—forward !”

When the hag and her infamous employer, entered a chamber predetermined to be that of death, Robson, as his villanous nurse had already apprized his wife, was frightfully excited. His mind was wandering over the past and present ; and to all the confused ideas which racked his burning brain, he gave free utterance. He talked ramblingly of slaves, and whips, and irons ; then, breaking into a wild exclamation, he dared any one to prove that his first wife’s death was caused by strangulation.

“ It’s false as hell !” he roared. “ Did not the slave doctor attend her ? And he said that the marks upon her throat were accidental. And I am wived again, it seems. The first

wife brought me that with which I purchased the second one. Ay, and she looks forward to succeed to all—ha! ha! ha!—and mate her with a younger husband!—and buy him, as I bought her. I kept the cards in hand, however—and when I can travel to Edinburgh, I'll play a play she little wots of, that will leave her the same beggar that I found her. Ha! ha! That will be glorious revenge:—I won't delay it. Ere a week passes—”

“Thy place will be with the dead,” whispered the now-determined murderess, as she stooped her head over the delirious wretch, and then glided from the chamber.

Of the Fenwicks who had returned to the mansion of the head of their house, when his daughter's marriage with Robson had unexpectedly restored the alienated property to its former owner, a natural brother, named Francis, was the most remarkable. He was a man who, in early life, was distinguished by the *soubriquet* of Black Frank—a title he had acquired from the darkness of his hair, or, as others averred, from the ferocity of his disposition. Towards his own family he preserved a savage affection; and bold, ignorant, and unscrupulous, a better

tool to work an evil purpose could not be found in Britain. Him, the lady of Fenwick Hall, summoned to a private interview. He hated Robson, whom he considered a usurper of the estates of a name to which he clung with devoted fidelity. During the late laird's life, Black Frank had discharged an agent's duties, an office he still retained under Robson; but though, from circumstances, he was obliged to eat his bread, from his soul he detested his new patron.

"Frank," said the lady, "sit thee down. But first make fast the door: we want no eavesdroppers."

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Fenwick obeyed the order, drew the bolt, and placed himself on a stool beside a table, on which a silver cup, filled with claret, was standing.

"I drink to thee," said the lady, as she touched the tankard with her lips.

"And in return, receive my faithful duty, fair dame," and the Borderer dipped heavily into the red wine, with which he solemnized the pledge.

"Frank," said the lady, "I have but sorry news for thee. He who calls himself my lord,

hates thee for some secret reason. The night this singular occurrence happened in the hall, he told me he had written by the messenger to some false knave, his lawyer, to find him another steward. I remonstrated—and his reply was short, but intelligent enough: ‘There be too many Fenwicks in the Hall. Its owner must root the vermin out—or gads sooth! they’ll multiply:—rats breed amain, you know.’”

The dark Borderer leapt from his chair, and thrust his hand beneath his vest. From the action, it was evident he clutched a dagger; for though weapons, openly displayed upon the person, were discouraged by the authorities of the day, few went abroad without carrying some dirk or pistol, to which they might have recourse if violence were offered.

“Dog!” exclaimed the dark Fenwick, “by Heaven! an it cost me half an hour’s hanging at Carlisle, had I heard the upstart call aught that bore our ancient name vermin, I would have repaid the insult with six inches of cold steel.”

“Nay, chafe thee not, dear Frank. Oft have I had my feelings wounded to the quick; and

quean and beggar, and every epithet of disgrace have been heaped upon me. I bore the insult—not on my own account—for I would rather seek charity alone in the world than eat that maligner's bread. But then how many of my poor kinsmen are dependent upon me ; and if I parted from my brutal lord, they would be turned out to starve, or beg, or steal ; and on their account I strive to bear his contumelious treatment. But to-night, and in his ravings, out came a secret he had managed to conceal even when giving loose to drunken fury, and loading me with gross abuse. Like thyself, I too am to be discarded."

"Thou?" shouted the Borderer.

"Patience, dear kinsman. Fret not thyself. I shall bear reverse of fortune like a Fenwick, and when I am turned from this Hall—"

"Turned from this Hall! Never, lady. Ere that day come, the steel I feel pressing on my heart shall have found a sheath in Robson's. But what means this tale I hear? Was the hound's tooth poisoned? Is he raving? Is he mad?"

"He is delirious—knows none around him.

But Gormly still thinks her art will work a cure—and then, thou and I must shift as we best can.”

The Borderer's brows united in a scowl.

“What means,” exclaimed the lady suddenly, as if the thought struck her for the first time, “the strange stories I have heard in girlhood, that men demented by a dog-bite were smothered to prevent them infecting others with their rabies?”

Black Frank started; and a dark, triumphant smile crossed a countenance already flushed with rage.

“Ha!” he exclaimed, “that hint will do. Rest thee at ease, fair kinswoman. Thy tenure of Fenwick Hall is firm as its own foundation, and that was formed of the best ashlers that Norham Castle could supply the builder with.”

He rose, unlocked the door, and was hurrying out, when the lady exclaimed:

“Stop, Frank! What means this sudden haste?”

“I'll tell thee within an hour, lady,” was the hasty reply; “a Fenwick acts first, and explains his reasons afterwards,” and he rushed along

the passage until the sound of his footsteps died away in the distant corridor.

It will be necessary to observe here, that the barbarous practice of smothering patients suffering from hydrophobia, had, a century or two ago, been one of common occurrence in both Scotland and Ireland—and that, I believe, within the memory of aged men, these unfortunate victims were thus summarily disposed of. That this brutal custom extensively prevailed at no distant period is certain. It is said that not fifty years ago, a lad of nervous temperament, whose hand was merely pinched by a playful spaniel, had his feelings sufficiently excited to betray some alarm and uneasiness which could have been readily removed; and that the noble estates attached to an Irish earldom, reached a former possessor by a foul murder, safely effected under the plea of hydrophobia.

CHAPTER IX.

"HA!" said the dame, after she had secured the door, and as she paced the apartment, "the hint was taken promptly. 'Tis true, Gormly might have worked the matter out; but, like the Red Kilpatrick, Black Frank will 'make it sicker.' I wish the hour were over. Well, 'tis but self-preservation after all. Still I feel nervous, and I can't remain here alone." And opening the door, she stepped a few paces down the corridor, and sounded a silver hand-bell. The summons was promptly answered, and her tire-woman — a foster-sister — came into the closet of her mistress.

"Janet," said the lady, "my spirits are depressed; sit thee down and talk to me. Hast thou heard aught of my lord's malady?"

"As I came hither, dame, I met Meg Gormly in the passage. She says that she would not

wonder he died ere midnight; and that the death were marvellous sudden at last."

The lady, fierce and determined as she was, felt a shuddering sensation creep over her.

"Meg," continued the attendant, "is not only a skilful but a considerate body. She says that Master Robson is so violent that it requires strong power to hold him on the bed, and as he is ravin' about matters gane by, which it would na be fit for stranger ears to listen to, she brought Black Frank, wi' his brither and twa kinsmen, jist for to help her to keep the laird quiet. I met them mounting the turnpike,* the backway till his chamber."

"Wine, girl, quick! fill me a glass of Burgundy," and she pointed to a sealed flask upon the table.

The cork was drawn by the tire-woman, the glass filled and offered to the lady; she raised it to her lips, and as the wine was drunk, the last groan of Hugh Robson was faintly heard from beneath a huge bed of feathers by Black Frank and his confederates, who held the mattress over the doomed wretch with grasp of iron, while

* Winding staircase.

Gormly flung herself upon the top, and by her weight produced a speedier suffocation. 'Twas said he struggled fearfully; but in five minutes the foul quean announced to the assistant murderers that all was quiet below. The bed was removed, and there lay the departed slave-driver; his bloodshot eyes, slaving lips, and purpled countenance telling too plainly how fierce the struggle was before life had parted.

"Strake the body, and in wi' the bed into the closet yonder. Wipe his mouth dry, and close his een, if possible," said Gormly with surpassing coolness. "There—stick his head noo abune the pilla, straught his right leg a bit; an' doon wi' ye by the back stair, and leave me till I gi' the alarm that he's parted in a fit."

* * * *

Never was murder more skilfully and unscrupulously effected. Not a suspicion was created—not an inquiry was made. On the morning succeeding the assassination, Helen Fenwick, now a widow, departed for Edinburgh, deputing to Black Frank the office of committing to the tomb him whom he had consigned to it. The death revelry then common on the Borders was kept up for three successive

nights,—and early on the fourth day, the corpse of the murdered man was interred with all the pompous parade which marked a burial of the wealthy in the kirkyard. “An’,” continued George, “auld Robson’s leein’ under the vara stane yer honour’s cockit an.”

“Egad, George, I’ll take a new position. I doubt my rear might be invaded from below, and—as the fancy say—an unruly ghost might prove an ugly customer, you know.”

“Ugly or na,” returned the antiquated game-keeper, “my feyther settled him, an sae ye may stick whar ye are, for Mr. Robson will na langer trouble onybody. An’ noo that ye ken a’ about the murther, Colonel, I’ll tell ye as mickle anent the ghaist.”

“The murder’s capital, George. None of your fabricated ones could touch it.”

“An’ ye’ll admit, after ye’ll ha’ heard the tale,” returned the old man, “that the ghaist is jist as gude;” and he thus continued a story, which, as I have done already with the opening of the tale, I shall take the liberty of communicating in ordinary English.

The fishery of the Tweed at Norham, was then the most valuable on the upper waters and

remarkably productive, although it might not have been sufficient, as it did in Bishop Pudsey's time, to feed a whole garrison

"On Fridays, when they fasted,"

with salmon fresh or salt, according to the season of the year. The draughting, as it is done at present, was effected sometimes in the night. Robson, in life, had been a man remarkable in face, air, and figure, as well as from a peculiar mannerism in dress, from which he never had made a departure.

The evening he was interred was, for the month of July, one of that wild and threatening character, which in December would have been supposed to harbinger a tempest, but still it was not the less favourable for the operations of the salmon fishers—and as a "spaight" had brought a run of clean fish from the sea, the boatmen prepared for their customary work, as they always did at nightfall.

I have already mentioned that the pathway ran through the kirkyard, which connected the cottages of the fishers with the sheeleen they occupied on the river bank. Nine men were required to work the salmon nets, and eight of

them had arrived. It was the Sabbath-night ; and with the reverend observance so generally paid in this country to that sacred day, the fishermen were waiting until—

“ Long, loud, and deep, the bell had toll’d,”

which announced that another week had opened. The chimes were heard, and the clock in the church-tower beside them struck the midnight hour.

“ We’re all here,” said one of them, “ but Jock Armstrong.”

“ Jock will na be lang ahint his time, I’s e warrant,” returned another ; and ere the words had passed his lips, the absent fisherman staggered into the sheeleen, and sank upon the first settle he could reach. The expression of his face was ghastly ; his hair stood on end, and his eyes seemed bursting from their sockets, as by the blazing wood-fire his astonished companions examined his pallid features.

“ He’s fay,”* said an old man ; “ he has met wi’ the gentle people.”†

“ Or crassed the enemy o’ man,” observed a second.

* Mad.

† The fairies.

"Pish!" cried a dare-devil, who in early youth had led a Border life, and was considered the most reckless spirit in the neighbourhood. "He's ainly frightened wi' a worricow in the gloamin'. Jock Armstrong's a stoot chiel wi' livin' folk; but he disna fancy to meet the dead. I ken he wonna crass the kirkyard after nightfa' alane, when he can avoid it. Gie him some whuskey, Rob."

Slowly the frightened fisherman recovered speech, and a third glass of undiluted alcohol enabled him to communicate the fearful adventure that had befallen him.

While the chimes of midnight beat, he had entered the kirkyard wicket, and as the hammer fell for the twelfth time on the church bell, he was passing the grave of him who had owned the Hall of the Fenwicks. There lay the last tenant of the tomb—and the frightful accident which had ended his existence so unexpectedly, was not remembered without making the passer-by shudder at the recollection.

"Thy last hours," thought the Borderer, "were sairly troubled; but naethin' noo will brak thy rest!"

He turned his eyes from the grave. A

stranger stood beside him. He was attired in a brown coat with glittering buttons of cut steel; his nether garments were silk stockings, united to what are now-a-days called "short tights." A voluminous waistcoat, black wig, and slouched hat completed the covering of his outer man—while shoe, knee, and stock buckles, of paste and silver, finished the costume and established the identity. The stranger was Hugh Robson.

Jock Armstrong had not been acquainted with the laird when in the flesh—and after death, men are not solicitous about an introduction to the departed. Awfully alarmed, the fisher hurried along the kirkyard pathway; but the ghost could also "go the pace," and on reaching the broad avenue, he was "cheek by jowl" with the terror-stricken fisherman. If Armstrong turned his head aside, Mr. Robson was close beside the opposite elbow. To use a fancy phrase, he "would not be denied"—and until they reached the kirkyard gate, the ghost stuck to the salmon-fisher "like a brick."

"Bah! man," exclaimed Will Foster; "'tis fancy after a'. When I was out in the forty-five, and when others left him, I stuck by

Prince Charlie frae Gladsmuir to Culloden, where I gat a whap o' a musket ba' that brack my leg. I lay the night upon the battle-field, an' the dead thick eneugh aroon me. Ne'er a ghaist did I see, and I dinna b'lieve sic thrasharie."

"I do," said the oldest fisherman; "an' I wouldna pass Robson's grave, my lane, na, nat for a year's free draftin o' the sawmon here."

Foster, when he recommended whiskey for his friend's recovery, had not neglected to refresh himself; and stout of heart—as assuredly he was—and also strong in liquor, he swore he would step into the kirkyard, and see whether Mr. Robson had retired to rest, "as decent folk, ye ken, should do at midnight."

He did; while some treated his expressed intention as idle vaunt, and more endeavoured to dissuade him from attempting it. But he persevered; and after an absence of five minutes, returned to the sheeleen a more terrified salmon-fisher even than Jock Armstrong. Mr. Robson, it appeared, was indeed afoot; and he had honoured the hero of Culloden with an escort to the gate of the churchyard. Whether his perambulations were restricted to holy ground,

or that he considered it *infra dignitatem* to go further than his own premises, it is certain that the spectre never put a toe beyond the gate of the kirkyard; but, however, he never let an opportunity pass of showing civility to any gentleman who passed his present residence after the witching hour.

“Use lessens marvel,” and in time the salmon-fishers and the spectre became intimate. Whenever two or three of them would pass the kirkyard after midnight, the ghost regularly joined the party. The La Trappe system on both sides was rigidly observed. Mr. Robson would not condescend, it seemed, to speak first; and it might be considered impertinence in jack-booted gentry, like the salmon-draughters, to make advances to a personage who sported silver buckles in addition to a brigadier wig. Accordingly, though they walked the kirk-yard, and in company; although a ministry had gone out and a dissolution was expected; Mr. Robson made no political inquiries on sublunary matters, nor did the fishermen think themselves authorized to ask how matters went on below.

In Fenwick Hall there was “wild revelry,”

for Black Frank ordered all as seemed good to him—the lady remaining in Edinburgh. Rumour flew over the country that Robson “visited this pale orb” as regularly as Norham Church struck the midnight hour ; — and suddenly Meg Gormly was summoned to her account, after making a most unholy end to an ill-spent life, as all present bore testimony. In her wanderings, she spoke wildly about Robson’s death,—said, that “his spirit haunted her”—muttered that “the bonny widow had her wish, and that na a drap o’ blud was spilt, but what cam frae the dead man’s nostrils. Hegh, cummers !” exclaimed the beldame in her ravings ; “talk na to me o’ leed and iron. Gie me, for speedin’ a chiel cleverly awa, the feather-bed ; that is, ye ken, an’ ye hae as gude help as Black Frank, an’ three ither o’ the Fenwick lads.”

The conjecture we offered that Mr. Robson’s movements were restricted was extremely erroneous ; for after sporting his figure in the kirk-yard, he retired to Fenwick Hall to amuse himself for the remainder of the night, and then and there, to use the parlance of a noble peer, he “played Hell and Tommy.” Had he

confined himself to the room he died in, or even appropriated a suite of apartments, the thing might have been tolerated—he would have been “left alone in his glory”—and the servants permitted to go about their businesses as of old. But being of the Newcastle school, he very properly considered that he had “a right to do what he pleased with his own,” and after dark, not a spider-brusher dare venture into the lobbies, without encountering a stout gentleman in a brown coat with silk “continuations.” Mr. Robson, like bad fortune, was anywhere and everywhere, “up stairs, and down stairs, and in my lady’s chamber.” In the flesh, he had been a bad style of man—and in the spirit, his manners had not altered for the better. His system was what is called the “free and easy,” and he had the indelicacy of intruding on the dormitories of the female portion of the establishment, without even knocking at the door. In short, he was a most uneasy ghost, who, as it would appear, had received a roving commission from his Satanic Majesty.

Much as fortune had frowned upon the house of —, whose only crime was unflinching loyalty, she made an exception in

favour of Reginald Morton, who had fought his way to the command of the regiment, which then garrisoned the Castle of Edinburgh. Though eighty or ninety years ago intelligence travelled slowly, the news of Robson's death reached Morton in a week or two—and the strangest rumours were circulated respecting an affair at once tragical and mysterious. That himself or his hound had been in any way connected with it, was totally unknown excepting to another. Kilbuck was in glorious health; and whatever might have caused the calamitous end of the laird of Fenwick Hall, Morton felt assured that neither his hound or himself were accessories in the remotest degree. Still Reginald was far from happy; his heart was in the possession of a woman, whose conduct towards himself could not be justified; and touching whom, and on more serious charges, rumour began to circulate strange tales. The fiery temper of Helen Fenwick; the unhappy circumstances under which her ill-advised union had been contracted and continued; the neglect, which in her, appeared unpardonable, in committing an ailment so fatal as her lord's to the management of an ignorant spawwife; the haste

with which Robson was interred; the knowledge that the deceased had actually taken preliminary steps to prevent her inheriting his property; the dying confessions which escaped Meg Gormly; and lastly, the re-appearance of the departed one—an occurrence in that age to which much importance was attached—ay, and considered gravely as more striking evidence than all beside to prove that foul play had been resorted to—all these circumstances united, gave a moral, although not a legal colour to the belief, that Robson had been removed by other than natural causes, and that his wife was cognizant of the act.

• * * * * *

Seated in his lonely apartment in the Castle, to which he had retired from “the merrie ha’,” where his military companions were drinking pottle-deep, Colonel Morton was buried in gloomy reveries. Helen Fenwick had broken faith with one to whom her hand was plighted; she had contracted a heartless marriage, but she never, never could have been fiend enough to be either a promoting or consenting party to the murder of her husband,

wild as her temper was, and rooted as her hatred to him might have been. The stream of popular opinion ran strongly against her; but though wronged himself, Helen would not wrong another. A knock disturbed this current of uneasy thoughts—and an under-warder presented a letter to the Commandant of the Castle, which had been handed to the sentry at the gate.

“Who brought it?”

The warder could not tell.

He broke the seal. The contents were brief:—merely a request that Colonel Morton would meet the writer at a house duly described, situated in one of the wynds leading from the High Street, and immediately adjacent to the Palace. He fancied the writing was not a stranger's; and although disguised, suspected the invitation was a woman's.

“I am in no mood for foolery,” he muttered, as he read the *billet* for the third time. “I'll go, however—'twill kill a heavy hour. In this world I have little to hope, and less by far to fear.” Waiting till the trysted hour came, Reginald threw his cloak round him, and

descended the long street that leads from the Castle towards the Palace.

At the entrance of the wynd—as they call a court in Auld Reekie—a female was waiting for him, for she demanded his name first, and then desired him to follow her. Leading the way to a chamber on the upper story, she opened the door, and ushered Morton in. There, by a lamp whose light was partly shrouded, a female was seated. She was habited in black; and although the room was wrapped in gloom, and the face of the lady obscured by crape-weepers—as women's mourning was termed at the time—Reginald Morton at a glance recognized his former love.

“Art thou here, Helen?” he muttered.

“Yes! Thou hast heard that I am widowed.”

“The sorry news indeed has reached me. Would that event had not occurred;” and Morton sighed deeply.

“How mean you?” she said, as she sprang passionately from her chair.

“I am, Helen, one of those who never blanch in the presence of a foe; and whose speech is ready as his blade. I would not willingly wound thy feelings, could I hold back the

truth ; and wild stories are rumoured touching Robson's end. The tale of madness is absurd—Kilbuck this night shared my humble supper ; and on my return home will stretch himself, as he has for many a year, beside his master."

" Pshaw ! Reginald Morton, I blush for thee ! Thou need'st, I wot, an excuse for breaking early promise ; and the vulgar babblings of idle rumour are held sufficient. Were thy fair fame impugned, I would have stood up for thee to the death ; and thou, who swore you loved me—*me*, the only one on earth—you hearken to the whisperings of the rabble. Is this worthy of thee, Reginald ? I looked to thee for protection. I put faith in thy expressed words—' Were I honestly widowed, thou would'st marry me.' Alas ! it seems I built my house on sand."

" Helen, is *thy* widowhood indeed honest ? The tale of what caused Robson's death *I* know to be fallacious. I adjure thee to say, by every hope of happiness here and hereafter, was that unhappy man's a natural decease, or wert thou, as the world will have it—" He paused.

" Speak out thy words boldly," said the lady ; but the words were whispered.

"*A murderess?*" said Morton, and his searching eye was turned on hers.

At the moment when this fearful question was delivered, the Abbey clock chimed, and its ponderous bell told the hour of midnight.

"How did thy husband pass, Helen? Foully or fairly?"

"*Fairly* as Heaven is true!" was the reply.

"*Foully* as hell is false!" was returned quick as an echo; and as Morton and the lady turned round, startled at the intrusion of a gentleman, who seemed in no ways backward in offering an opinion—there stood, *in propria personâ*, wigged, breeched, and buckled—Mr. Robson!

The lady fainted on the spot. The Colonel, we suppose, demanded whether the ghost was on leave of absence between returns, or had retired to Pandemonium on half-pay. Mr. Robson, however, was too ungentlemanly to return a civil answer; and the meeting ended in "most admired disorder."

"And how did the whole affair wind up?" I asked the old man.

"Why it's easy tauld. The ledly retired to a convent over seas, for Reginald Morton would na ha her. The Colonel, puir man, was sticket

unfairly in a duel, after he had let the gentleman who had fallen get on his legs again—and that was unco foolish in him. An my ain honest feyther was the last sufferer of a', except Black Frank, who was justified at Carlisle for fire-raising in the Lothians, an a wee-bit murder that happened accidentally, in pitting the stead-ing in a low."

"But why should your father have been a sufferer? He had no hand in the affair," I observed.

"That's a' true, Colonel, but I'll explain it to ye. He was a bauld man, and had been oot wi' the young Prince in the forty-five, an had a narra escape frae the woodie, on which mony an honest mon had his craigie stretchit at Carlisle. Weel, he was one of the fishers here; an one unchancy night he got a wee thing fu, an nae-thing would do thro' fule hardiness, but he would ha a crack wi the ghaist. Now, tho' Mr. Robson wakit every night wi any body that passed thro' the kirk-yard, he never opened his lips to ony one; and feth! the folk had nae desire to begin a chat wi' him. It's held to be unlucky, ye ken, and sae it proved to the puir Colonel, for he was rin thro' the carcass, within

a twalmonth, after he ceeviley askit what business a ghaist had in a ledly's chamber. Weel, my feyther kept his word, an mair to his ain sorra. He spoke wi' the spectre—an what passed between them never was made known—but when he returned to the sheeleen, there was na mair bluid in his face than in a turnip."

" 'Weel, James, what news frae—' and the fisher pointed his finger towards the bad place.

" 'Speer me nae questions,' said my feyther, 'Mr. Robson will trouble ye no mair.'

" 'Hae ye spoken 'till him, James?'

" 'I hae,' returned my feyther, 'and I wish the tip had been taken off my tongue afore it wagged ; it's na to be mended noo.'

" Weel, Colonel, my feyther was a hale mon, for he was no forty. He never did a han's turn's gude, but dwammelled away—and before the yule-log was laid in the hearth, he was lyin in the kirk-yard. He's buried in yan corner."

" Faith, George, you seem to have taken care to separate him from Mr. Robson," and I smiled.

" Dinna fancy, Colonel, that this story is idle clavers. Mr. Robson ne'er appeared again ; my feyther deed within thra months, an a the auld

people ken it to be true. Noo, Colonel, sodgers are rash and fearless—but an ye iver meet a ghaist, jist keep ye'er distance, and enter into na conversation, gude nor bad; for once a mon is sodded, he's nae fit company for the living."

"Upon my conscience, George! I fully agree with you, and should I meet your fat friend, notwithstanding his silver buckles and general respectability, I'll cut him dead, *et nullus error*, as the Duke of Wellington pithily expresses it."

We rose, quitted the kirk-yard, and in five minutes were across the Tweed, and again in "Merrie England."

CHAPTER X.

A FRIEND of mine, the host of the King's Arms, in whom I have as much faith as Hamlet had in the ghost, and whose word *anent* all piscatorial matters I would take "for a thousand," frequently spoke of the upper part of the Whitadder, where that beautiful stream receives the Dy, with ardent praise; while another, albeit not a disciple of "the quaint and cruel" Isaac, dwelt with enthusiastic ardour upon the pastoral beauty and romantic character of the wild and secluded district called the Lammermuir. To both I listened with deep interest, and either report would have been to me a sufficient inducement to undertake a brief pilgrimage to these lonely glens, even had they not been associated with the name of Scott, and converted by his inimitable legend into classic ground. I put myself accordingly

into light marching order, and set out to visit a scene I had heard so much about, and which certainly more than realized my expectations. Roofing "the Magnet" at Berwick, I took the road to Edinburgh, being apprized that at a place called "Tommy Grant's" I could diverge from the high road and strike through the Moors to Abbey Saint Bathans, where, as I was assured I should receive, according to poetic authority, "the warmest welcome in an inn."

Who ever travelled twenty miles upon a coach without gleaning some information? Beside me sat a lady's-maid, the family she appertained to, occupying the interior of "the leather conveniency." They were fresh from a continental excursion, had steamed up the Rhine, and visited, on their return, the far-famed plains of Waterloo. The *soubrette*, who was extremely communicative, gave me a full, true, and particular account, not only of the field but of the fight; and although I had been there myself, I suppose in the general confusion, some interesting particulars had escaped me. One of her most graphic descriptions was that of a personal encounter between old Blucher and Marshal Ney, until "both fell from sheer fatigue from the horses."

Of this "terrific combat"—as this sort of set-to is described in Astley's play-bills—I had never heard before, and touching its truth I ventured to express some suspicion. But as the man who *ciceroned* the visitors had been himself an eye-witness, I bowed to his authority. I always reciprocate information; and as we passed Lamberton-Bar—a turnpike which separates the kingdoms, and unites lovers by the dozen—I pointed out to my pretty companion the treacherous "Coothouse" on the English side of the gate, where woman has been tricked into invalid matrimony by villanous man; and implored her when she came matrimonially to the Border, to be sure the knot indissoluble should be tied in the kitchen. She listened like another Desdemona; and, as she was a native of Auld Reekie, and consequently a canny Scot, I fancy after my warning, there would be some difficulty to persuade her to stand hymeneals in the cow-house.

My visit to Lammermuir was to be unfortunately marked *nigro lapide*, and indeed, will ever be one of painful recollection. The whole of the preceding day it had thundered, but the peals were distant, and the rain fell but slightly.

To-day the sky was heavily overcast, and an oppressive heat and woolpacked clouds, told that they were surcharged with lightning; and soon after leaving Berwick the storm burst awfully. It rolled away, however, towards the left; and, as it appeared, its fury had been reserved for and discharged upon the hills of Lammermuir.

I heard the thunder-storm that harbingered the field of Salamanca; and I watched the lightning flashing across "red Waterloo," as we couched in the tall rye the night before the battle. I suppose these elemental uproars were forgotten in the bloody morrow which they preluded—for I feel convinced that neither will leave the lasting impression on the memory, like that which I witnessed yesterday.

The coach had been delayed an hour beyond its time, as the oppressive heat prevented the horses keeping their usual regularity. A momentary stoppage landed me and my personals at the hostelry of Tommy Grant, and on inquiry, I found what Panglos scalls a "vehicular conveyance" was unattainable, excepting I would embark person and property in a common cart, which as "needs must," I willingly accepted.

While waiting for the horse being "yoked," they told me that a melancholy accident had just occurred—a man, and the two horses he was ploughing with, being struck with lightning and killed.

Humble as my carriage was, I was too happy in having obtained any mode of transit save my own legs, for the sun had burst out with an intensity of heat which I had never felt, even in the Peninsular. We took a by-road that branched towards the Lammermuir, and passed the field where the accident had happened. The horses were lying harnessed on the ground as they had been struck down, but the body of the young man had been carried to his father's house, which, with half-a-dozen others occupied by the grieves, was attached to the farmstead, and stood on the road side which we passed. As we drove along we heard "the cry of women." Well, grief that finds expression is soonest remedied. But a scene awaited me that, to the last hour of my life, I shall painfully call to memory.

A short distance from the house where the corpse after death had been conveyed to, I observed an elderly man seated beneath a stone

dyke, and a young girl of uncommon beauty, endeavouring, as I supposed, to console him.

"That," said the driver, as we passed, "is the puir lad's feyther and sister."

I could not proceed without offering a stranger's sympathy—and jumping from the cart, returned to the spot the mourners occupied.

The sun shone out with all the intensity peculiar to the pauses which intervene between the disruption of rain-clouds on a thundering day. Bare-headed, the old man appeared insensible to heat, to me almost intolerable. I approached and took his hand—and to my silent pressure the grasp of a horny palm was returned.

"The sun, my poor old friend, will sicken you. Come, change to the other side, where you will get some shelter."

"I dinna feel it," he said. "My brain is burnin', and when the heed's afire within, what recks it aboot sun or shooer wi'out?"

He looked slowly up and scanned me over. Not a tear was visible in his clear blue eye, and its glassy glaze was turned upon mine, which I am not ashamed to say was moistened.

"Ye are gentle o' birth," he continued, "for

kindness always comes fra gentle breeding. Ye are a sodger, too. That slash across the cheek, and the proud bearing o' yer walk, tell me the trade ye followed. Many a man ye ha' seen stretched in yer time, and yet yer heart is soft. I was a sodger mysel lang syne—an saw a bluidy field at Corunna. My heart ne'er quailed—but noo, Archie, Archie, my youngest an' my best-loved !”

Tears burst in a torrent from his eyes. Up sprang the fair young girl, and clasped him in her arms.

“ He'll live ! he'll live !” she cried in an agony of joy. “ Tears rin doon his face. The heart winna brake, the heart winna brake, after a'.”

“ God comfort you !” I said, as I wrung his hand.

“ Amen !” replied the fair-haired girl, and flinging her arms around him, she led him to the house, as I mounted my humble vehicle, and seated myself on the bag of hay which had been especially prepared for my accommodation.

* * * * *

The outline of the Lammermuir is wild, but

beautifully pastoral. There are an eternity of hills extending over the whole surface, but not one alpine enough to refuse approach to a London common councilman. Many of these swelling knolls are richly-wooded, while sylvan scenery and mountain rivulets diversify a surface of brown heath and green pasture. The Whitadder winds through a line of valleys, until, in Scott's words, it

“Hurries its waters to the Tweed,”

and holds a central course through the most picturesque valleys of the Lammermuir, after having received a pretty tributary called the Dy, a mile above Elmford.

Such is a rough sketch of the face and character of a broad district, which, but a hundred years ago,

“Echoed to the robber's horn,”

but which for half a century has been unstained with a crime, save one.

Lammermuir—as his Grace of Wellington would happily express it—is not Tipperary—and here you will not get a man shot for love or money ; and, even an attempt at assassination would set the district in an uproar. To-day,

as in the course of my wanderings, I passed close to a plantation,

"Heh! sir, look yonder," observed my conductor. "Fra behine yon hedge an attempt was made to commit murther!"

And the intonation of his voice, rising as the sentence proceeded, had nearly reached a scream at the awful word that closed it.

"Only an attempt, my friend," I replied coolly. "Pish! An Irish guide would not waste his own words or the traveller's time, with recording a bungling effort at sending a gentleman to eternity."

"May the Laird preserve us!" exclaimed my companion, proceeding to give a round-about detail of a transaction which, in my opinion, is not worth record, only to point the inadequacy of punishment to crime.

A widow, the wrong side of thirty-five, had a brace of lovers ten years younger than herself; and considering that she could be happy with either, she did not send "the other dear charmer away," as she should have done, but flirted with the twain. At last she was obliged to make an election—and owning, *à la* Mrs. Malaprop, "the soft impeachment," consented

to accompany the fortunate youth in a few days to the hymeneal altar. The rejected one took his "throw over" in deep dudgeon, and determined to put in a caveat to the projected union. He borrowed a gun, bought some lead at Dunse, fabricated a handful of slugs, and waited patiently in the plantation to put the gentleman

"Who took his stand,
Upon the widow's jointured land,"

past leech-craft and the prayers of the kirk.

Three evenings he kept a bright look out, but in the haze he could not securely mark his victim—and not wishing to throw a chance away, he waited patiently for the fourth one. It came—the morning

"Which promised rapture in its close,"

was settled for the next one, and the gay bridegroom and his "best man" were proceeding to pay the last visit that the lady, "in widowed loneliness," expected to receive. The rejected lover, who had decided on interrupting the hymeneal rites by a more effective process than forbidding the bans, fired deliberately from behind the hedge as his rival passed it, and

lodged some fifty slugs in the body of the bridegroom, and half-a-dozen in the arm of his friend, which happened, unluckily for the owner, to be rather in the way.

Now, in his anxiety to make the job complete, the ruffian had so over-loaded the gun with slugs, that the powder had not sufficient power to drive them beyond the depth of a flesh-wound. The intended victim consequently recovered—the murderer, in intention, was convicted on the clearest evidence, and the Law Lord who tried him, sent him for seven years beyond the seas! Was that punishment adequate to the crime? The scoundrel had gone twenty miles to obtain the gun—had travelled half that distance to procure the lead—had waited four long days to effect his murderous purpose—and he got off with less punishment than would have been inflicted on a respectable sheep-stealer fifty years ago.

Before I detail my evening angling, I must introduce the reader to the hostlerie I am cantoned in. It comprises two rooms—the chamber of dais I occupy in the lonely stateliness of another Robinson Crusoe; while Mrs. Martha Pringle, with the whole of her establish-

ment, sojourn in the opposite one. This latter is an apartment of surpassing utility—for it is kitchen, dormitory, and general reception room for passing travellers. Lest a way-farer should pass in ignorance, a board is affixed to the gable of the mansion, intimating that Mrs. Pringle is engaged in the sale of foreign spirits, and also carries on an extensive wine trade. Now by this platitude in description, the sale of Highland whiskey is typified ; for during a residence of thirty years, with the exception of one half anker of smuggled brandy, no liquor save Scottish alcohol ever crossed the threshold. When the Duke Aranza complimented the rural retreat he had selected wherein to pass his honey-moon, he described it as “ a low, snug, dwelling, and in good repair.” I cannot extend this praise to the Highland caravanserai where I am located at this present writing : the roof is sadly in want of thatch—and the back wall of the building is only prevented from falling outwards bodily, by half-a-dozen young fir-trees which shore it up.

“ Meg,” I said, addressing a young lady, who I am informed will inherit the virtues and personal effects of “ auld Mattie,” as the neighbours

call mine hostess—"in heaven's name, why don't ye rebuild that tottering wall?"

"Heh! we ha been thinkin o' it these five years," returned Miss Pringle, "but its unco fasheous, and sae we'll jist stick anither tree again it after harvest, and knock anither winter oot."

But justice for Lammermuir obliges me to say that my chamber is clean and comfortable. Though there is no "butcher meat," the ham and eggs, and chuckies are commendable—while the Whitadder trouts are remarkably fat and well-flavoured, and young Meg fries them to perfection.

* * * *

I strolled out after an early dinner, and proceeded up the river to a favourite hole called "the Black well." While putting my rod together, I fell into conversation with a herd who was skinning a dead sheep, and was informed by him, that the animal had been killed by an adder-bite; and that the Lammermuir was as much afflicted with these reptiles, as the Cheviots had formerly been by foxes. This was the fourth wedder his master had lost during the season—and every

sheep-owner in these hills had suffered more or less.

The adder which seems peculiar to the Lammermuir, far exceeds in size any I had met with in the Highlands, and but for the unity in description which all I spoke with preserved, I would have fancied that the venomous, little, dirty, ash-coloured reptile, scarcely ranging above a finger's length or two, had been confounded by the herds with the harmless whip-snake I had so often found in English forests, and frequently in the Argyleshire muirs. But ere many minutes passed, I had an opportunity of convincing myself that the herdsmen were correct. His sheep-dog pointed at a bank—a low hissing, like that of a young kitten, was heard;—the shepherd called his dog in, and moved a bunch of ferns with his stick, and out glided a reptile which measured two-and-twenty inches, after the herd had dispatched it at a blow.

I killed a dozen and half of fine large trouts with minnows, as I descended the stream, and on arriving at mine inn, found the kitchen thickly tenanted. The herd, who had finished the adder, was waiting by special appointment

for his "mutchin of whooskey." A travelling merchant from Dunse, with a pack-load of coarse haberdashery wares, was also refreshing himself. A gipsy tinker was uniting a broken sugar-basin, while his wife, at the gable of the house, was telling the miller's lassie her fortune; who, though detached for a supply of sugar in double quick, had determined to ascertain the trade and complexion of her future husband, before the minister, who had dropped in upon the man of grain, should receive the saccharine ingredient, wherewith to compound his toddy. I stepped into the kitchen to light a cigar, and found the company busy in discussing certain peculiarities connected with adder bites, and their remedies. On this subject they seemed quite *au fait*—and agreed unanimously that "the sovereignest thing on earth," parmacettie not excepted—was a sort of hell-broth, prepared from an adder skinned, cut into steaks, and boiled on a slow-fire, care being taken to skim this infernal *potage* from time to time, to remove the venomous portions of the composition, which would be sure to rise to the surface.

I ventured to express my infidelity touching

this nostrum, proving in every case a specific ; but my scepticism was reproved by Miss Pringle, who pointing to an ancient turnspit reposing underneath a chair, at once triumphantly established the virtue of hell-broth over Holloway's ointment or Morrison's pills.

"Look at the wee doggie under my mither there. He's, puir thing, a foondling, and I got him at Dunse whare he went astray. When he cam here, ten years ago, the folk I gat him fra, ca'ad him "Juno," but for shortness we christened him "Jack," and he seemed to tak kindly wi the name."

I here ventured to remark, that the poetic license was extensive, by which a male turnspit was named after the Queen of Heaven. I certainly recollected a case in "the gem of the sea," where the canine species was ingeniously altered, but still the generic appellation was respected. An Irish gentleman, who wanted a house-dog, was presented with a greyhound called 'Spring.' "Faith! I made him answer well enough," said the new proprietor, "for I docked his ears and tail, turned him into a mastiff, and called him 'Lion.'"

"Weel, weel, Colonel!" continued Miss Pringle, "I dinna ken much difference between

Juno and Jack, after a—but that's nae matter. The wee beastie under the chair, had na been here mair than a few days, when in he cam happin on three legs, wi' the fourth yun as thick as a' the ither three pit together. I kenned at a glance he had been bit by a sarpent, and expected he would die, when who should come in but the schoolmaister's eldest bairn. 'Meg, woman,' says he, 'rin oot. The biggest adder ye ever laid eye on, I have kilt ben the hoose, wi a stane.' Well, oot I dashed, picked the beast up, skinn'd and boiled him, and washed Jack we the licker weel and aften; an there he is, puir beastie. What div ye say to that, Colonel?"

It would have been useless to have entered the lists with Miss Pringle, for the tinker and travelling merchant—men of extensive experience—came forward with conclusive proofs of what had been done with hell-broth, and as that too was under their own inspection, argument would have been useless. I, accordingly, sate down upon the table, fabricated a glass of toddy, listened to an account from the tinker, of his wife having been assaulted in good daylight and upon the open moor by a truculent adder, who bit her through her two woollen petticoats with

other clothes which it would be incorrect to name—and but for prompt administration of the hell-broth, there was not a doubt but the lady at present telling the fortunes of the miller's maid, would have been gathered to her fathers. The travelling merchant sang into the same strain; Mrs. Pringle also added her valuable testimony; and to all these testimonials respecting living adders, I dare not play deaf one. I retired for supper to mine own great chamber, to decide afterwards if I could, whether the vulpine fallacies of the Cheviots, or the adder heresies of Lammermuir, were more unconquerable.

It is said that in “auld lang syne,” the audacity of the foxes which infested the Cheviot range of hills, actually surpassed belief; and the ingenuity of man was consequently hard taxed to counteract their enormities. Necessity produces invention, and, at last, balm was found in Gilead; for an ingenious gentleman by the following simple formula abated the nuisance:

“Foxes do much mischief in all steads,” quoth the author of a valuable treatise,* “chiefly

* “Of the greate plentie of hares, red deere, and other wild beastes of Scotland. Of the strange properties of sundry Scottish dogges; and of the nature of salmond.”

in the mountains heer, where they bee hardly hunted. Howbeit art hath devised a meane to prevent their malice and to preserve the poultry in some part, and especially in Glenmoores. Every house nourisheth a younge foxe, and then killing the same, they mixe the flesh thereof among such meate as they give unto the fowle, and other little bestialle ; and by this means, so many fowles or cattell as eate thereof are safely preserved from the danger of the foxes, by the space of almost two monthes after, so that they may wander whither they will, for the foxes smelling the flesh of their fellowes yet in their crops, will in no wayes meddle with them, but eschew and know such a one, although it were among a hundred others."

Now, not having practically tried this remedy against robbery, I still hold some doubts whether the addition of "a younge foxe" to the dietary of the poultry-yard would improve the general flavour of "the little bestialle" therein contained ; and I entertain still stronger suspicions, that the "red rascal" would not respect the charm, even though his own father had formed the principal article in this valuable admixture. I am going

in a few days into the Cheviots—and I sincerely pray that Luckie Macsneish, to whose hotel and hospitality I am specially recommended, neither entrusts the fattening of the chuckies to the formula detailed above, nor even depends upon it for their security. If she do, I shall have a chance of dining with Duke Humphrey on my arrival in the glens; and she may sit down under the dyke, and troll the burden of Dominie Sampson's song—"a good fat hen, and away she goes!"

CHAPTER XI.

I HAVE not pinned my faith on the opinions of others, nor would the *dicta* of Izaak Walton himself, did he honour me with an evening visit while moth-fishing in twilight on Till or Teviot, induce me to jump to a hasty conclusion ; but I do believe and avow, on the veracity of a Christian man, that there is not within the four seas of Britain, a river fit to hold a candle to the Tweed. Whether its beauty, its romance, or its angling advantages be considered, this classic stream, with its splendid tributaries, is unrivalled ; and whether the visit be poetic or piscatorial, it will repay the wayfarer for a pilgrimage.

There are men who have asserted that angling is effected by the agency of a stick and string, whose opposite extremities are provided with a fool and worm. There are others who fancy that dabbling in the New River, or the Tower

Ditch—before it was filled in—came under the name of fishing. In Cockayne, the delusion is not to be removed that a fish-dinner is procurable at Blackwall—and that the same comprehendeth Dutch eels, filthy perch, London salmon, and water-zouchy. With persons holding such heretical opinions, I would not condescend to hold converse or keep company ; but let them go to their account, “with all their imperfections on their heads.” But to the enthusiast in the gentle art—he whose keen eye can detect the rock beside which the fresh-run salmon is reposing, and whose true arm can project the fly, light as thistle-down itself to the broken water that eddies over “the silvered visitor” from the sea ; or to the poetic spirit, who loves to wander by moorland tarn or glittering streamlet, meditate in the mouldering Abbey, or dream of border frays and “foughten fields” amid the ruins of some demolished fortalice—these I invite to classic Tweed—ay, even should it be necessary to beg, borrow, or even steal the *viaticum* for the journey. Should the latter be resorted to—were I upon their jury, I would consider that the end justified the means—and return a verdict of “not guilty.”

But to a far different class, and these generally hardened offenders, who annually endanger soul and body at the Crown and Sceptre, by a surfeit of white bait, I would also extend my invitation. Let them make their wills, cherish their wives, whip the children, and throw themselves on board the first steamer bound to Berwick. Let them pass such a day as I did yesterday on "silver Tweed," and if they ever re-visit their families, or return to Pudding Lane or Amen Corner during their natural lives, I'll write myself "a soused gurnet."

I was invited by a gentleman of the town to join a rustic party—and partake of an *al fresco* entertainment, in this corner of the earth termed "a kettle"—and while the ladies proceeded to the scene of action by land, we rowed up the Tweed in one of the flat cobbles used in salmon-fishing. The day was fine; and the varied scenery which the bendings of the river occasionally presented, was extremely picturesque. At any time of the year this row up the Tweed would have been interesting; but from the active draughting for salmon, and the numerous groups of fishermen we passed, the stream had acquired additional animation; and, as the

sun shone brilliantly, nothing could be more sparkling than the silver scales of the beautiful captives, as they were dragged by dozens to the shore.

There is a peculiar method employed by the salmon-fishers on the lower Tweed, which I



SALMON FISHING.

have not remarked in use at other waters. Beside several of the fords, lofty observatories framed with wood and mounted by an attached ladder, are erected, having a box on the summit, like the judges' stand upon a race-course. Here a man is posted—and his practised eye detects

the back-fin of the salmon as he hurries up the stream: an alarm is given from the look-out; the net is shot—and generally, the victim is enclosed and captured.

As much wading is unavoidable, the fishermen are provided with water-proof boots. They are made of strong leather, coarsely soled, and studded with enormous nails. They roll up when required to the waist; and the jack-boots used by the household cavalry, are as opera ones to these by comparison. From day-break on Monday morning, until midnight on Saturday, the ford-fishers remain booted, ready to launch the cobble at a moment's notice when the look-out descries a passing fish. I used to imagine that the "watch and ward" at Branksome Castle was severe,* but as these brave Borderers who

"Carved at the meal,
With gloves of steel,
And drank the red wine thro' the helmet barr'd,"

* "Ten of them were sheathed in steel,
With belted sword, and spur at heel;
They quitted not their harness bright,
Neither by day, nor yet by night."

Lay of the Last Minstrel.

had three reliefs,* compared to a Tweed salmon-fisher, their *tour-de-service* was about as oppressive as that of the gallant gentleman in blue or scarlet, who may be seen daily—ay, and even in the wet weather—comfortably niched, carbine in hand, at either side of the Horse-Guards.

The place chosen for our *fête champêtre* was happily selected. It was a ruined mansion, enclosed in an acre or two of ground, once comprising a goodly orchard,

“And still where many a garden flower grows wild.”

There were old stone piers, and grotesque figures, and broken urns: all were memorials of the past, and pointed an imposing lesson of mutability and decay. But one object, more striking than all together, appeared at the bottom of the garden. There stood the family vault: its close vicinity to the ruined building, harmonizing well with the general picture of decay. I gazed a few minutes on “the narrow house”—and the Scriptural admonition struck

* “Nine and twenty knights of fame
Hung their shields in Branksome hall.”

Lay of the Last Minstrel.

me forcibly : “ *That* is the end of all men, and the living should lay it to his heart.”

Dilapidated as the exterior of the mansion was, the interior was still more ruinous. Some of the sashes were only here and there supplied with broken glass ; but the greater number were boarded up, or their shutters nailed together. The huge chimney in the hall, bore evidence to the antiquity of the building ; and here many a petitioner, or delinquent, had awaited, with trembling anxiety, the appearance of the great man, on whose breath hung the possession of the cottage, or not unfrequently, a committal to the stocks. I turned into the dining-room : half its panelling was gone, and the rough plaister of the walls, which the oak wainscot had once covered, was exposed. In the corner stood a large press, or as it might better be described, a closet. One of its folding doors had fallen from the hinges, and the empty shelves within were visible. Were they always empty ?—Ah ! no. Many a flask of wine had been extracted from that well-stored crypt, when the yule-log sparkled in the chimney, and the crowded board “ groaned with the weight of the feast,” the misletoe overhead announcing that “ merrie

Christmas" had come round again. How often had this fretted ceiling—now mouldering piecemeal away—echoed back the gibe and jest? But where were they that uttered them?—those who "set the table in a roar." I raised my eyes—through the shattered casement I saw the little building across the garden. There, he who had filled the seat of honour was reposing: and the banquet-room had been exchanged for the charnel-house.

I left the once "merrie ha," and mounted a staircase, whose clumsy ballusters bespoke its solidity, and seemed determined to withstand the touch of time. The peasant girl, who had chaperoned us through the gardens, halted here, and declined a pressing invitation to accompany my further researches. "Was she afraid to trust herself with me?"

"Na, nat a whit," was the naïve reply. "A gentleman wi' a white pow had given up daffin wi' the lassies."

"Well, why would she not pilot me, when my grey head offered such ample security against flirtation?" She hesitated, and after some demur, acknowledged that she "was greatly afeard of ghaists."

"Ghosts! Who ever heard of a ghost taking exercise in daylight?"

A heavy tramp was heard, the salmon-fisher, who had rowed me up the Tweed appeared, with a basket containing a fish taken five minutes before, and crimped *secundum artem*. "Why, Jeanie, woman!" he exclaimed, "what the deil are you scared about? Here, tak' this sawmon ben the hoose, and I'll gang through the buildin' wi' his honour."

This substitution of service was highly agreeable: Jeanie seized the basket and disappeared. While the boatman tramped up the staircase, the heavy foot-falls of his iron-shod boots, contrasting strikingly with the melancholy silence, which seemed to reign paramount through the desolate mansion.

He pointed to a built-up doorway, and informed me that this—the communication between the inhabited wing, and the deserted portion of the building—had been thus interrupted, for the double purpose of "keepin' aff the ghaist, and saving' the winda-tax," and I admitted in return, that either of these considerations was quite a sufficient apology for retrenching the ruin. A large and gloomy

lobby opened on the stair-head, and on went the salmon-fisher, making as loud an alarum down the corridor, as William of Deloraine did on the night he turned resurrectionist at Melrose Abbey, when—

“The arched cloisters, far and wide,
Rung to the warrior’s clanking stride.”

At the termination of this passage, a folding-door, of which one moiety was unhinged, gave us admission to the drawing-room. Like the apartment underneath, it also was panelled with brown oak; and as its casements were less sheltered from the storm, but little of the glass remained, and the nailed-up shutters threw an additional gloom over its desolation; while the broken carving of a chimney-piece of black walnut, exhibited a few spots of tarnished gilding, and gave the room a more melancholy air. Inside, there was a wainscoted chamber, gloomier and more ruinous even than the drawing-room; and a third chamber completed the suite. This—possibly the dressing-room—was in a different style: for a few tattered shreds of paper, which described an antiquated hunting scene, were dangling from the walls.

My conductor permitted me to contemplate these forlorn relics of pristine gentility for a minute—and then intimated that these were the haunted apartments.

“And, upon my conscience!” I ejaculated, “a better beat for a walking gentleman* could not be found. Why a ghost in the commission of the peace, or worth three hundred a year, might be proud to select these quarters.”

“Your honour laughs,” returned the salmon-fisher, “I never saw him, but I heard him.”

“Heard who?”

“The ghost.”

“Nonsense!”

“Ay, I heard him, as surely as I hear you,” was the reply.

“Was it a ‘spirit of peace, or goblin damned?’ ”

“I don’t exactly understand you; but I’ll tell you the story. I was sweet-hearting at the time, wi’ the woman I’m married on syne, and as is common in the kintry here, I used to come to clash wi’ her, when the folk here were quiet and

* In Ireland, a person who revisits “this round orb,” after having been decently interred, is said “to walk.”

asleep. To sae the truth, I was oftener a-foot by night than day at the time : for, if the truth is told, I was then a wee thought in the smug-glin' line, ye ken. As Jeanie and I could na' jist the while manage to come together, wa did na wish a' the world to claver aboot our keepin company—and sa when a' the family were at rest, I used to come to the back yet, and creep in through a windy the lass left open. The servants slept below—the gentlefolk on the floor abune us—for these chamers had sic an awfu' character, that deil a yun would venter in after night-fa' on ony errand. Smugglers are darin' cheils,—and in my day, they said I was a bould yun,—so for fear the lads below would catch us at the coortin', I persuaded Jeanie—and sair agen her wool—to come up to this room, where yer honour stands at present.

“It was a Friday night, gude Lord ! I'll niver forget it, nor Jenny ather—I had run a horse-load of brandy into Berwick—got it a' safe, and made mysel' a wee thought fu', when I cam ower the water to keep tryst with my Jo here. We cam up stairs as usual ; and after a while's coortin', I began daffin' Janet aboot the

ghaist. 'Jeanie,' says I, 'if the auld lad cam and cotched us.' 'Lord sake! man!' says she, 'dinna name him, or I'll drap.' 'Hoogh! woman—dinna fash yoursel' aboot sic folly; there's na sic things as spirits.' Noo—mind what I'm goin' to say, Colonel—the words were scarce oot o' my mouth, when tramp, tramp, tramp,—a heavy fut cam doon the lobby yonder—Jeanie clung to me half-faintin'. We heard the ooter door opened, and then the second after it. Wasn't it a mercy we had mad our coortin' in this one? For, as I suppose, the ghaist was ashamed to come into the room where he had murdered his beautiful leddy."

"Murdered a beautiful lady!"

"Ay—ay; patience, Colonel, and I'll tell ye a' aboot it as we row doon the river in the evening. Weel, Colonel, we waited there a' night, and did na dare venture oot till the sun was beamin' in; an' the de'il a fut iver Jeanie or mysel' set inside the ghaist's rooms after it. But I hear them callin' for ye—so come up stairs—though ye'll see naethin' there but ruins."

I found, as the salmon-fisher had apprized

me, that the upper department of the building was still more ruinous than the rooms below. The roof was sadly defective, and the water it admitted was sapping the floors, and doing the work of demolition more silently, but securely than the storm. One chamber at the extremity of the corridor had more interest for me even than the haunted room below it. That room, Horne Tooke had occupied; and a few years since, among a heap of rubbish and the *débris* of a deserted house, several notes and scraps of his writing were discovered. I looked around me with respectful admiration. This decayed and desolate apartment had once tenanted a high and gifted spirit; and probably, on the spot I stood, some philippic was indited, before which corruption trembled! A voice behind me broke the reflective chain. It was the lassie; and Jeanie, encouraged by the presence of a second protector and broad daylight, had gallantly ventured up the stairs, to tell me "the kettle was a' ready," thereby intimating the contents of the same.

I followed the salmon-fisher, who strode down the stairs in advance, Jeanie prudently

keeping in the centre, and thus having her front and rear secured.

"Jeanie, lass," said the descendant of a moss-trooper, as we passed the door that led to the ghost's apartments, "will ye keep tryst wi' me here the night?"

"Na, Rob," replied the girl, "I would na venture that, were ye as young, and twice as weel-favoured as when ye near drove Janet Armstrong mad, by bringing her to sic a place to coort in."

And so saying, she bounded down half-a-dozen stairs, and vanished.

I found on issuing from the haunted house, that, while all the company besides had been actively employed, like Diogenes at Sinope, I had been an idler. In a corner of the garden, a fire had been lighted; and over it, and supported from three stakes united at the top, "the kettle," was suspended. Around the fire, a dozen salmon-cutlets, each fixed upon a wooden skewer, were roasting; and to the gardener's wife, the task of boiling the potatoes had been confided. It was what in the land of Cockayne they call "a refreshing sight," to see that honest

kettle bubbling, and listen to the gentle hissing of cutlets severed from the person of 'a salmon, which one brief hour before could have thrown a clean sunnyside over the bright surface of the Tweed. My eye wandered up the alley—for there, was "metal more attractive." Under an ash that had seen two centuries, the table was being spread; and three prettier women than those that were garnishing the same, could not have been found over the wide Border. It is true that the men have degenerated—taken to trade and agriculture—without courage "to cry stand! to a true man," or stop the royal mail;—but as far as beauty goes, there is abundance on the "debateable land;" and "by the simplicity of Venus' doves!" Tweed, as well as Yarrow, has its flowers.

I have dined with Duke Humphrey, which meaneth I have not dined at all. I have gone through the same operation upon nine ounces—the commissary called it a pound—of a bullock, which had been on his legs an hour before, after travelling three hundred miles by forced marches. I was once feasted in the Guildhall, on Lord Mayor's day—and have had the

honour of slipping my legs under the mahogany of an Archbishop ; but the dinner I shall ever recall to memory with 'greatest pleasure, was that beneath the old ash tree ! my old Peninsular companion, M—— on my right flank ; and Mary—I dare not name her—beside me. Oh ! were I younger by thirty years ! But it is unavailing to complain—for all left to a man of sixty, is “ rum and true religion.”

“ Time and the hour run through the longest day,” and even a kettle must terminate. We parted with a *doch-an-durris*,—and while the Border maids and matrons, with their admirers and liege lords, proceeded to Berwick by land, I placed my destinies at the disposal of Rob Armstrong, and returned to the place from whence I came, as Ophelia in the old ballad is said to have gone to Heaven—by water. In this I considered I was not doing the adventurous, inasmuch as a man who would perpetrate a flirtation at “ moonless midnight” in a chamber, well known to be in the occupancy of a ghost, might be safely entrusted with my person on the Tweed. But there was no danger in the navigation—it was a sweet evening ;

though the lamp of Cynthia struggled fitfully through the trees which overhang the stream. But when we cleared the wooded banks,

“ I would you had been there to see,
How the light broke forth so gloriously,”

dancing on the bright surface of the smiling river, and displaying, in the distance, the dark outline of the works of Berwick, which once had held the array of a kingdom in check, but now could be entered in as many points by a single battalion, as there were companies in the regiment.

After I had parted with him in the morning, I heard some interesting particulars of my friend in the heavy boots, who was now rowing me down the Tweed. He and his family were the lineal descendants of the last Borderers who signalized themselves after the Union of the Crowns. Old Fuller thus quaintly describes these “ worthies :”—“ They are like to Job, not in piety and patience, but in suddain plenty and poverty ; sometimes having flocks and herds in the morning, and none at night, and perchance many next day. They may give for their

motto, '*vivitur ex rapto*'—stealing from their honest neighbours what they sometimes require. They are a nest of hornets; strike one, and stir all of them about your ears. Indeed, if they promise safely to conduct a traveller, they will perform it with the fidelity of a Turkish Janissary; otherwise woe be to him who falleth into their quarters.

* * * *

"They wear a wolf's head," proceedeth the old gentleman, "so that they may be lawfully destroyed without any judicial inquisition, as who carry their own condemnation about them, and deservedly die without the law, because they refused to live according to law."

Now Fuller's legal deductions may be very correct; but had the old chronicler propounded his forensic opinions on the Border, "a Lockerby lick" from an Armstrong or an Elliot, would probably have closed his literary labours, and left his worthies *minus* their historian.*

The last grand movement of the moss-

* The Worthies of England.

troopers occurred on the death of Elizabeth—and while “gentle Jamie” was progressing to London, receiving here “a purse of gold,” and there “a learned oraytion” at one town “a peale of ordinance with bone-fyres,” and at another “a sermon from Tobie Mathew, Bishop of Durham,” with “a fair Barbarie horse, in rich furniture suitable,” and “deep-mouthed hounds and swift haulkes of excellent wings.” While these proceedings were going on, the Borderers, disliking idleness, “when the Queen’s deathe was knowne,” commenced operations on both sides, “the which was called the busie week.” Lord Hume received instructions to repress them, and he seems to have made an excellent selection in appointing “Lord Cranston to bee captayne of the guard; who did so much by his care and vigilance that a number of outlawes were brought to the place of execution, where, after lawful assize they had a reward for their past follies. Their names and surnames,” quoth John Monipennie, “for brevity wee omit. Some of them, who might have lived upon their rente, if so, they could bee content; but so prone were they to imbred

vyce, received from their forefathers, and drunken in their adolescencie, they never leaft off their first footsteps until they runne headlong to their owne destruction.”*

Now while gentle Jamie was making a general jail delivery of all malefactors, excepting papists and the swell mob,† he surely might have permitted the honest Borderers to amuse themselves for a week, without resorting to the use of “St. Johnstone’s tippet.”

Of such a stock was my Tweed Palinurus, and, if report could be credited, he was a true descendant of a family who generally made

* Summarie, &c., printed at Brittaines Bursse, by John Bridge, 1612.

† “On the 19th day of April, at York, after dinner, his Majestie commanded all prisoners to be set at libertie, (wilful murtherers, traytors, and papists being excepted).

* * * * *

“On the 22nd, at New Warke upon Trent, a cut-purse heere was taken in the act, who having great store of gold about him, confessed that hee had convoyed his Majestie from Barwicke; there was a warrand given to hang him, releasing all prisoners beside.”—*The Royale progress of his Sacred Majestie.*

a last visit to Carlisle, "that place where the officer always doth his work by daylight," to wit—the hangman.

It was a singular fact that in this man's family, the Border blood appeared unchanged and unchangeable—and of his numerous kinsmen the same character was given. They were grateful for a kindness, and revengeful if an injury or a slight were offered—none of them ever pursued a quiet calling—they were smugglers, privateersmen, poachers, or salmon-fishers; but to handicraft pursuits, they had as deep aversion as Rob Roy had to article his son Hamish to Baillie Nicol Jarvie. Touching the distinction between *meum* and *tuum*, their opinions were held by persons learned in the law to be very erroneous—several of the family having from time to time been dispatched to Australasia—and my companion, for stabbing a man in an affray, had been accommodated with a free passage to Van Diemen's Land, whence, after a residence of seven years, he had returned home the preceding autumn. I love to occasionally consort with an intelligent malefactor. The first

grouse I ever shot was under the tutelage of Shemus Rhua, a rebel captain, then an outlaw ; and in latter years, the man who shared my bothey in the Irish Highlands, had been thrice convicted of homicide before he had counted thirty summers. These admissions may compromise my character ; and in self-defence, I here solemnly declare my innocence of manslaughter and mail-coach robbery. And lest the gentle reader should lug in the old saw of *noscutur e sociis*, I beg to assure him that I am not of a truculent disposition, and that my walk of life has been decidedly anti-felonious.

With these necessary explanations, I shall give the Borderer's legend—and although in a Court of Justice, the evidence of a returned convict might be questioned, I see no reason to impugn the ghost story of Rob Armstrong, a personage who had heard the chimes at midnight, with the creaking of a spectre's boots as a fit accompaniment to the same.

As the *patois* in which the tale was narrated, to a southern reader would be unintelligible and require a glossary, I shall render it into the vulgar tongue. This liberty I take with Mr.

Armstrong, as, like his friend William of
Deloraine,

“ Letter or line knows he never a one,
Were it his neck-verse at Harribee,”

and, therefore, I shall be pretty safe from
being detected in paraphrasing his “legend
wild.”

CHAPTER XII.

THE LEGEND OF ELMFORD.

THE lawless character which the Border districts had obtained from the predatory habits of those who lived upon "the debateable land" about two centuries ago—about as pleasant and safe a locality as Tipperary is at present—altered after the union of the kingdoms; and it is rather questionable, whether the change was much for the better. The "*vivitur rapina*" was exchanged for "*dum vivimus vivamus*." It was, in truth, a drunken and debauched era; and an Irish squire, a Highland laird, and a Border proprietor might have been started even, and all safely backed to win in the race of ruin. In Ireland "the dirty acres" gradually disappeared, until the heir, like Sir Lucius O'Trig-

ger, had nothing to succeed to but his honour and the family pictures. In the Highlands, muir and mountain passed into the hands of "folk and bodies," who, as the Gael would indignantly observe, had "driven shuttles, and pined yarn, Cot tam them!" But on the Celtic race—Irish and Highland—rapidly as they decayed, still ruin did not come so sweepingly and fast, as that which visited the Borderers. An Irish gentleman might grind the tenant for a while; a Highland chieftain now and then receive a subsidy from abroad, or levy a trifle of black-mail from the Lowlands. But compared with both, the Borderer had formerly an El Dorado to resort to; and as Falstaff reconciled himself to his raggamuffins, by recollecting that there was "plenty of linen to be found on every hedge," so, when the commissariate in a house upon the marshes began to exhibit a reduction in its rations, the honest owner blessed God that there were grazing farms in Northumberland, and a moonlight ride would set matters right again.

But, after the Union, a distinctive system of *meum* and *tuum* was introduced, that might be very proper, but found extremely inconve-

nient. In "lang syne" it was marvellous how far two or three bullocks and a score or two of sheep, obtained Heaven only knew how and where, went in simplifying house-keeping ; and the new order of "pitch and pay" was found generally objectionable. In the good old times, half a dozen industrious lads could maintain a Border family most respectably ; but now, a midnight ride across the Tweed, would most probably end in an *exit* at Carlisle ; and as Border hospitality survived the means which erstwhile had supported it, among many of the oldest and the proudest families, acre after acre disappeared until the broad lands were alienated wholly—and even the name, in too many cases, after a few years vanished from recollection.

The ruined house. I have described, had passed within a century through the possession of four proprietors ; and the last purchaser of the estate had risen from humble life by honourable industry, and retired from the bustle of the Gallowgate to the quiet of the Border. Mr. Anderson was a widower, and the father of an only child—a daughter.

Neither in face or figure was May Anderson anything remarkable. The latter was under-

sized, the former rather plain. But a purer mind, or gentler temper never gifted woman—while her talents were of the highest order—and considering how imperfect the educational system of the time was, her acquirements most respectable. When her father purchased and took up his residence at Ashford, May was in her twentieth year; and a woman better calculated to gladden the fire-side of any man who loved a quiet and a happy home, could not have been discovered on the Borders.

Six months had elapsed since Mr. Anderson had taken possession of his acquired property, and Ashford exhibited a very different appearance to what it did when he first made it his residence. Passing as the estate had done through the hands of persons, whose embarrassed circumstances had forbidden the large outlay which the long-neglected mansion and its grounds required, the restoration of the place was reserved for the opulent tradesman. The house was now substantially repaired, the plantations pruned and fenced-in anew, the garden smiled again, and all bore striking evidence that opulence and good order had succeeded to riot, poverty, and their consequences—dilapidation and decay.

To one of the branches of the Musgraves, Ashford had for centuries belonged. The suppression of Border violence which followed the succession of James, and the union of the kingdoms, however, had concluded their history, as it did that of many of the more important Border proprietors. Probably, for a century before, had the laird of Ashford, for the time being, "come to book," to use a sporting phrase, the fee-simple of the property would not have met its liabilities. But, like Comemara of old, when Dick Martin thanked God that the King's writ was not worth the paper it was printed on, it would have been a difficult matter to collect debts upon the banks of Tweed, for the *métallique* was not always obtainable. To make a man do anything "upon compulsion," Jack Falstaff rejects altogether—and to call in principle and interest from personages who considered it far more correct,

"Instead of broad pieces, to pay with broad swords"

would have been both a dangerous and problematical undertaking. A threatened lattitat would have had little effect on gentlemen who

were annually outlawed—and had any of the tribe of Levi shewed themselves in their vocation upon the Border, their place in the synagogue would have been vacant—for the old Borderers had a heart-hatred to Judaism, sheriffs' officers, and the discharge of old debts, considering the payment of any, save that of nature, as utterly unworthy of a man of spirit.

The line of the Ashford Musgraves—a family which a century before, could have sent four-score horsemen across the Tweed of a moonlight night—had gradually dwindled away in numbers, until William Musgrave was the only representative of that branch of an ancient name. Report spoke of him unfavourably. He was described as wild and dissipated; and rumour whispered, that all he had inherited from his turbulent ancestors, was a reckless disregard of every principle which is necessary for the security of life and property. To a youth of such disposition, an *émeute*, like that of the forty-five, would be congenial; and Musgrave had been out with the young Chevalier. Whatever evil qualities he might have had, his loyalty to Prince Charlie was devoted. He

followed his fortunes after the field of Culloden had sealed their ruin ; and for four years, had been an exile with many other of the adherents of the House of Stuart. Gradually the jealousy and apprehensions of the House of Hanover died away—the cause of the Pretender became hopeless—many who had been in arms were permitted to return ; and rather in the hope than the expectation, of gleaning something from the ruined property which had passed into the hands of strangers, William Musgrave received liberty to come home, and had arrived on the Borders at the period this story opens.

Few misfortunes befall men from which, like medicine extracted from poisonous flowers, advantage cannot be obtained. Musgrave, the *attaché* to what was in reality but the semblance of a Court, had still managed to profit by his exile. He was remarkably handsome. At twenty-one he followed the disastrous fortunes of the young Pretender, a wild, daring, reckless desperado—at twenty-five he returned to his native Border, looser in moral principle, but more dangerous to society from polished manners, and the power of masking a vicious dispo-

sition under a most prepossessing appearance and address.

William Musgrave did obtain from the *débris* of his dismembered estate a small sum of money, just sufficient to enable him to re-appear on the Borders as a gentleman: and one sweet summer evening, while May Anderson was engaged in her flower-garden, and her father was smoking before the hall-door, "his custom i' the afternoon," a visitor was announced, and Musgrave was ushered to the presence of the new possessor of Ashford.

To both, this unexpected meeting was embarrassing, but both determined to overcome it: Anderson by kindness—Musgrave by hauteur.

"You are welcome to this house," said the retired tradesman, courteously.

"There was a time I should have been so," was the reply.

"This is my daughter, Sir."

Musgrave, with the ease he had acquired at St. Germain's, and which the familiarity of the manners of the times permitted, advanced and kissed the blushing girl. Poor May! That ceremonious salute proved the opening of a fatal attachment.

Most hospitably, and with every deference to his feelings, Anderson entertained the ruined laird. He was a man of shrewd character and sound understanding, and far too wise to act the *parvenu* proprietor at a time, when property still lingered with the aristocracy. In point of fact, the most of the Border families were desperately embarrassed, if not altogether ruined; but still they nominally possessed estates from which their creditors now, that the order of things had changed and right no longer was synonymous with might, were enabled to obtain the greater proportion of the income. Still the broken gentlemen looked down upon wealth obtained by honourable industry with contempt; and the least assumption of equality, or an attempt to place riches against red blood as a set-off, would have elicited as strong an outburst from a Borderer, as honest Bailie Nicol Jarvie evoked from his kinsman, the Highland cateran, when in return for offering handsomely to take his son apprentice without a fee, Rob Roy consigned the worthy magistrate, with his looms, treddles and all, to a warmer locality even than the West Indies. Mr. Anderson with great tact avoided

all appearance of display and pretence—kept on the noiseless tenor of his way—offered no offence to his fiery neighbours—and in return, escaped those slights and insults to which others similarly circumstanced as himself, but without his prudence, were continually exposed.

Musgrave's errand, or pretended errand to Ashford, was to make inquiries after two or three family portraits, which he understood had been accidentally discovered in a garret. Mr. Anderson told him that his information was correct; and leading him to another apartment, he pointed to the portraits, cleaned and framed anew, and assured young Musgrave that he had only taken possession of these family memorials, until he should have an opportunity of restoring them to the lineal descendant, and now they were heartily at his disposal. This delicate mark of respect to the fallen family was not lost upon the Borderer—and the unpretending hospitality of the host, and the gentle attention of his daughter, propitiated one who had never heard the name before—mentioned without a burst of anger; and, late in the evening, he rode from the home of his

fathers, in a different mood to that in which he had approached it in the afternoon.

An hour's ride brought him to a little inn, where a companion was waiting his return over a stoup of Bordeaux wine. He was a Highlander; a short, stout, square-built man of thirty, with fiery-red hair, a slight obliquity of vision, and a face whose *ensemble* was decidedly repulsive. MacDougal, like his friend Musgrave, had followed the fortunes of the exiled family—had starved at St. Germain—obtained permission to return to Scotland—and visited the “land of brown heath,” with as little hope, and much less good luck than his friend, the Borderer. Small as the harvest reaped on the Border was by Musgrave, that gleaned in the Highlands by MacDougal was much less. The family property had been demolished, root and branch, and not a wreck remained. In a word, the fortune and influence of his name had been annihilated.

Muttering a Celtic curse, he finished the stoup before him, called loudly for another, and then demanded what had detained his companion so long.

“Long!” returned the Borderer; “I should

have accepted my host's invitation, and remained there for the night, only I knew that thou-wouldst be growling like a maimed bear."

"And did the churl ask thee in?"

"Ay, that he did; and entertained me right hospitably. I rode to my father's door with every feeling of hatred for its possessor. I left it, half-reconciled to him, and half-inclined to make love to his daughter."

"And what may she be like?"

"A woman without a single pretension to beauty—and yet one that a man might love."

"How looked the auld place? Not like my ancient home—a place without a roof—a hearth without a fire." And springing from his chair the red MacDougal strode through the chamber, uttering Gaelic imprecations.

"I should have scarcely known it, Angus; house, garden, grounds, all renovated—all cultured well. Every room bears the mark of opulence—the sideboard is loaded with silver; the servants are neat and orderly; and the stall my horse was led to, thou and I might sleep in. I never saw such nowt as the maids were milking in the close; and the very yard-dog shows that he has neither Lent nor maigre-day. In a

word, all in and about the house betokens quiet, wealth, and comfort."

"And did the carl bid thee welcome; was the wench civil; and in their hearts did they not devoutly wish thee at the devil?"

"No, Angus; there seems not a particle of jealousy towards myself; and my sire, my grandsire, and Black Richard are hanging from the walls of the drawing-room, with more gold about their canvas than I conscientiously believe the united purses of the three would have produced at any period of their lives. Damnation! would that I had been warned by thee, Angus, I could—nay, deem it not vanity—have been master of my own again."

"How?" exclaimed the impatient Highlander.

"By enacting the same mummary with May Anderson, that I went through with Claudine Dubreton!"

"Thou would'st rival royalty, forsooth!" returned the Highlander, "and have thy plaything at her own price. She turned thy folly to account; and thou wert dolt enough, to wed beauty and beggary. Well, you found out and

proved the proverb—‘ When poverty came in, love took his departure ;’ and the close of the honeymoon was the signal for a separation.”

“ Too true—too true, Angus.”

“ But think ye, you could win the wench ?”

“ She’s half won already, if I know aught of woman.”

“ Win her all out, then,” exclaimed the red MacDougal. “ None know, save three or four beside myself, aught of your marriage with Claudine. She is in France, and thou in Scotland ; and even did she discover that thou had’st comforted thyself with another wife, why, God’s mercy ! she will console herself with another lover.”

It would be a very doubtful question to decide, whether Musgrave or his adviser were the greater profligate. Both were ruined men—and May Anderson and her fortune appeared to be thrown as a god-send in the way. The Highlander’s sporran did not contain a solitary coin ; the Borderer’s pocket would not stand a month’s demands. Want of principle and poverty went hand in hand ; and Anderson and his innocent child were marked unscrupulously by “ the ruffians twain,” for ruin.

The progress of this unhallowed suit it will not be necessary to detail ; and Musgrave won a heart, than which a warmer and a purer never throbbed in woman's breast. No man exists without some weak point, and Mr. Anderson's was pardonable. To make a fortune is generally followed by a wish to found a name. His daughter's union with the heir of Ashford would countervail the obscurity of May's birth, and give her that position in Border society, that even wealth could not command. Musgrave played a cautious game—May would listen to no tale to his disadvantage—and her father succeeded in persuading himself that if his youth were wild and dissipated, his manhood had become reformed. Musgrave's addresses were therefore favourably received ; and May Anderson was united in form to a man, who was already married to another.

Too soon Anderson found reason to repent the selection he had made in choosing a son-in-law ; and poor May had cause to suspect, that she had listened to protestations of love which were "false as dicer's oaths." Ashford was "disturbed from its propriety ;" and a house where quiet and comfort had reigned before,

became the haunt of the drunken and the dissolute. Remonstrance from Mr. Anderson was met by indifference or insult, according to the mood in which Musgrave chanced to be ; and his mild and patient wife had her gentle reasonings coarsely repelled by the savage to whom she fancied she was wedded, and heard the brutal declaration from her husband, that his heart was in another land. Heart ! the ruffian had none.

One morning the wretched girl was summoned to her father's closet, and there found the old man booted and ready for a journey. "Close the door, May, although we have no reason to dread listeners—for 'tis scarce two hours, as they tell me, since the beastly revelry of Musgrave and his blackguard comrades terminated ; and, for half the day to come, their drunken slumbers will continue. I am bound for Edinburgh, bent thither on important business ; but it were an idle waste of time, unless I received thy assurance, that thou wilt carry out the object I go there to execute."

"Alas ! my father, my misplaced love has embittered thy declining years. Ask anything of me ; breathe but thy wishes ; and as I hope

for patience in affliction here, and mercy in a better world hereafter, thy commands shall be regarded by thy daughter as second only to those issued for her guidance by the great Author of us all."

"Enough;—I go to make an alteration in my will. I possess the power of leaving thyself absolute mistress of all I have earned by honest industry. Ay, from that park which Jock Ploughman is turning over, even to yonder pigeon which is cooing on the dove-cot. All, May, shall be bequeathed to thee; and all I ask from thee is a promise, that thou wilt retain them in thy power—full, unchallengeable, absolute power. Dole to that bad and wretched man what may seem to be good to thee; but mind the last wishes of a father—the injunction thou promised sacredly to obey. Let neither threat, promise, or persuasion, induce thee to give thy husband authority to slay a chicken, or even cut a berry-bush."

"All this—and by all my hopes of mercy! I undertake to do," replied the daughter.

"Then God bless and protect thee! I wanted this assurance, for I go to do an act that prudence demands, and which some whis-

pering at my heart tells, will nevertheless prove unfortunate! Once more, God bless thee!"

He said—strained his weeping daughter to his bosom—and in a minute or two the clatter of a horse's foot upon the paved court-yard, announced that the Lord of Ashford had departed.

CHAPTER XIII.

"ANGUS," said Musgrave, when a brandered fowl had been removed, and which was rather calculated to produce thirst than abate hunger, from the hot condiments the cook had introduced, to stimulate unduly stomachs of men whom debauchery and excess had rendered insensate to healthier and simpler viands, "pass the claret. What think ye of this sudden movement of the old carl? It bodes us little good, I trow."

"On that point you may rest certain, Musgrave. How feels the girl?"

"Intractable as the devil himself. Her very nature appears to have undergone a change," was the reply. "When I rose this evening, I saw an empty purse upon the table; and remembering that the Jedburgh race and the Kelso cock-fights come off next week, and supposing that we must be there—"

"Supposing !" exclaimed the Highlander. "Cot dam—I would'na lose either for the auld weaver's neck."

"Nor I," returned Musgrave, "were that the choice between them. Well, attend to me. I sent for May ; her tire-woman answered, that her mistress was busily engaged. As I had an object to obtain, I smothered pride, and condescended to go to her own apartment. What was my reception, guess ye?"

"Oh ! tears and reproaches, of course ; and an entreaty that you would give up bad company—thereby meaning me—and avoid late hours—and that means going to bed as we did at nine o'clock this morning ; and a—"

"No—no—by Heaven !" exclaimed Musgrave, passionately. "Neither remonstrance was made, nor advice offered me. She was writing, and scarcely deigned to raise her eyes. In man, and less in woman, I can badly brook indifference ; and as I wanted a favour from her, I thought it would choke me as I expressed it. I did, however, muster words to ask her to get me twenty pieces from the old fellow. Wot ye what her answer was ? Listen. She, who formerly smiled did I but notice her—and when

I played truant never reproached me but with a tear—who would listen at her open casement, and out-watch the moon, expecting my return—and when my horse-tramp fell upon her ear, bless Heaven that she was once more happy—”

“Pshaw!—a truce with her former folly, and keep thee to what concerns us more than the idle fantasies of a love-struck wench. To the point, my friend. When thou asked the money, what was the answer?” said the red Highlander, impatiently.

“I’ll give it thee in her own words: ‘Were I inclined to comply with the request you would have made of me, it would not be possible, inasmuch as about the hour you retired to bed this forenoon, my father set off for Edinburgh. But—I scorn to conceal my thoughts—were he here, I might comply, as, in a wife’s duty, I should feel bounden to obey my husband’s mandate; but at the same time, I would, as a daughter, counsel him not to waste his substance, humbly but honestly earned as it was, to maintain discreditable outlays, and support profligate companions.’”

“That was a lounge direct at me,” exclaimed MacDougal.

"Patience, friend Angus, the worst is yet to come. I blazed up, while she remained cool as an icicle. I threatened to go to the German wars, and she replied, that 'any change in my course of life would probably be for the better.' What think ye of that?"

"Why, I think that we are as nearly done up as we can be. What next?"

"I got *enragé*, became silly, I admit—swore that I would deeply recollect the slight she had passed upon me; and that when her weaver-father died, the next Yule afterwards, I would have at my Christmas table a goose that had grazed upon his grave."

"By our Lady! a sillier boast never passed the lips of a sane man! What next?"

"'Indeed!' she said; 'it was well you chose the kirkyard on which to feed your poultry: for after to-morrow evening—were it but the pasturage of a kid—rest convinced you will have no right to that in Ashford. My father will make that secure enough: and before the next week passes—'

"And shall I not succeed to what was my father's?"

"'I know nothing you are certain to succeed

to, except the clothes you wear: and those same, my poor deluded parent paid for. Excuse me, Sir, I'm busied writing. *This* is my *father's house*: these rooms are *mine*. The cellar remains unlocked; use the privilege for the time. Drink, Sir, and deeply as you please: you may, 'ere long, find wine not readily procurable.' ”

“By Heaven, you amaze me !” exclaimed the red MacDougal, “I should have just as soon expected to have seen a canary bird assail a cat, as that milk-and-water wench turn upon thee. What did ye ?”

“What could I do—but sneak from the room, scarcely crediting the evidence of my own senses. The change of bearing was so sudden and so marvellous ! What devil is in the wind, Angus ?”

“The devil, indeed !” returned Musgrave's companion. “I think there are not a couple of private gentlemen from the Pentland to the Tweed, more regularly ruined. D—n that piece of folly ! When you have half-a-dozen drappies in, as a wet night requires a man should have to steady himself next morning, you have no more brains than a woodcock. ‘Rest assured,

that self-same Christmas goose you spoke of, will cost you many a gold Jacobus.* But what the devil is to be done?"

* * * *

Three hours elapsed; and what was to be done became a very puzzling question, and one very difficult to be decided. After much deliberation, a course was resolved upon, and Mac-Dougal departed at midnight, attended by two Musgraves of low caste and evil reputation. The irregular movements of the red Highlander and his associates occasioned no surprise. Mac-Dougal had gone, as it was supposed, to attend some cock-fight, or blackguard meeting—and the only wonder was, that his friend Musgrave had remained behind.

At this extraordinary era, duration of life was in as blessed uncertainty, as it is at present in Tipperary. In the English capital, men were nightly "stabbed i' th' dark:" in the Irish, they were sped in mid-day; and no inquiry was

* This singular phrase was used by an Irish spendthrift to an aged uncle, who declined his repeated applications for money; and the old gentleman married at eighty-two, had a male heir, and cut the *roué* off from succession.

instituted regarding the demise of a gentleman,* after the nearest apothecary had pronounced him to be "past praying for;" while old Auld Reekie, in its wynds and closes, afforded an

* The state of society in the Irish capital, and the value at which human life was estimated "sixty years ago," may be correctly ascertained from the following anecdote, which was told the author by a gentleman still living, who actually witnessed the transaction. It will be necessary to acquaint the reader that Dublin was then infested with gangs of well-born, well-dressed, idle blackguards, members of the Hell-fire and Cherokee Clubs, who were a disgrace to their own order, and a terror to every other. These vagabonds rendered the streets insecure—and a peaceable citizen or country gentleman could scarcely venture into a coffee-house, without being exposed to insult or assault from these lawless bullies, whom the defective police arrangements of that time, allowed to run riot with impunity. I forget the name of the coffee-house—one probably extinguished a quarter of a century since—but it was then a fashionable house, and one to which these disorderly personages resorted.

"I was sitting," said Mr. Beresford, "after dinner, in the public room, discussing my bottle of claret—and at the different tables, at least a score of persons were collected, when a fellow of the order then termed 'Bucks,' threw open the folding-doors of the coffee-room. His name was Fenton. He was shewily dressed,

immense conveniency to the assassin, and a gentleman might, as quacks remedy diseases, "be removed with secrecy and dispatch."

Four days had elapsed since MacDougal had

wore an embroidered waistcoat, point ruffles, cocked hat, and a small rapier. He flung his hat and cane upon the table, looked superciliously around him at the company, and called for claret, which was brought him.

" 'Waiter,' he said affectedly, 'was that d—d scoundrel, Dick Daly, here this evening?'

" 'No, Sir.'

" 'Cursed sorry I did not find him, as I wish to cane the blackguard, incontinently.'

"The words had scarcely passed his lips, when the folding-doors were opened, and a personage, dressed in the most extravagant style of fashion, swaggered in. His costume was similar to Mr. Fenton's—but instead of a small sword, the weapon at his side had a crooked blade, then considered more fashionable among the bloods of the day, and termed a *couteau de chasse*. The new comer was Mr. Daly—and it appeared that his errand was to operate on the person of Mr. Fenton. 'Scoundrel' and 'liar' were instantly interchanged. Out flew both blades from their scabbards; a fight commenced, and not a man of twenty present, attempted to interfere. Daly was the stronger, Fenton the better armed—and evading the rush of his opponent, he retreated to an inner door. Just as he entered the passage, he of the *couteau de chasse* struck furiously at his antagonist—

departed, none knew and none cared whither ; and in two more, May expected her father from Edinburgh. She and her putative husband now lived totally apart ; and it would appear that neither had the slightest wish or intention

the point of the sabre cutting the architrave of the door, an inch above Fenton's head. This civility, at the same instant, was returned with a home *stoccata* from the small sword, which passed clean through Daly's body, and he dropped, a dead man, upon the floor. Mr. Fenton quietly withdrew the reeking blade, wiped it across the coat of his fallen opponent, returned it to the scabbard, stepped coolly across the bleeding corpse, bowed politely to the company, and departed, none present either asking a question, or offering to bar his egress. The whole affair was transacted within a minute, for

“ Few were the words, and stern and high,”

which preluded an encounter, that like a fox-chase, proved ‘short, sharp, and decisive.’

“ At the next table to that where I was drinking my claret, a respectable country gentleman was busy with his soup. He never put down his spoon—but turning his eyes from the dead man on the floor, to the deep sabre-cut over the doorway, he quietly observed, ‘Lord ! what a pity that Dick Daly struck an inch or two too high, or, by Saint Patrick ! the world would have been delivered of two of the most troublesome scoundrels in existence. Waiter, you may remove the soup !’ ”

to return to more amicable relations. The fifth and sixth day passed, and Mr. Anderson had named the evening of the latter, as that on which his daughter might expect him. The window of her private chamber commanded the Edinburgh road for a mile—and there May sate, watching for a distant view of the parent she loved so fondly, as his well-known figure would top the distant height. Presently, a horseman showed himself upon the hill:—was he the expected one? Oh, no. His pace was too hurried for the sober amble which her father seldom exceeded in his journeyings. Right for Ashford rode the horseman—plunged into the river, although the bridge was within half a mile—he clattered into the court-yard, and sprang hastily from his reeking horse. He spoke rapidly, and but one sentence; and a man who had gone forward to take his horse started back in horror; while a female domestic who was accidentally within hearing, gave a scream. He was, indeed, the bearer of sorry news—the evening before, Mr. Anderson, in returning to his lodgings at the Gallowgate, had been stabbed, on the second landing of the

house, to the heart.* Robbery was not the motive—for his watch and money had not been abstracted by the murderers, and the cause of the assassination remained a mystery. The perpetrators were unknown; and all that could even induce a suspicion was, that “a wee-bit lassie” had seen three strangers on the turnpike a while before, and she could only tell, that one of them was red-headed.

Two days after the sad intelligence reached Ashford, the body of the murdered man was brought home, “and it was laid in the little vault at the bottom of the garden, which I shewed you, Colonel, this morning.”

The shock which this terrible and unexpected calamity occasioned to his attached daughter may be well imagined; but no noisy ebullitions of sorrow escaped her—for her’s

“Was the composure of settled distress.”

Musgrave assumed ‘the inky cloak,’ that

* It is, I believe, not more than twenty years since, that a bank-porter was murdered and robbed at mid-day in one of the Edinburgh closes, and neither the assassin nor the property have ever been discovered.

mockery of mourning ; but many circumstances in his bearing, indicated too plainly that his pretended sorrow was put on. His nights, as usual, were spent in drunken revelry—and poor May's silent and unobtrusive grief was too frequently disturbed by the distant uproar of the drunken orgies, which occasionally reached her solitary chamber from the hall below. Musgrave now assumed the master ; and, as such, he found no difficulty in raising supplies for the extravagance of himself and his dissolute companions, by selling cattle, and borrowing money from the tenants, who looked upon him as their lord ; while poor May was too deeply immersed in sorrow, to either hear or heed the wasteful means, by which her profligate husband recruited his exhausted treasury.

It was on the seventh evening after Mr. Anderson had been consigned to a bloody tomb, that two strangers arrived at Ashford. Their routes, their errands, their appearance were particularly dissimilar. One came from the south, and his visit was to the laird. The other arrived by the northern road, and his business was with the lady. The southern

stranger was but a lad, extremely handsome, and showy in his dress and appointments. The northern visitor, on the contrary, was a grey-headed man, soberly attired, and apparently the member of some learned profession. Both, on their arrival, were conducted to the apartments of those whom they inquired for. When the graver visitor was introduced to the lady's closet—an apartment thus designated at the time, but which is now more fashionably called “a boudoir,” right gladly was he received, for the mourner flung herself upon his neck, and wept upon his bosom.

“Friend of my dear father!” and sobs interrupted the words of welcome that hung upon her lips.

“Not friend of thy father now, May! but, thy father—” said the old man, as he folded her in his arms. “I would have been with thee sooner, but this desperate transaction for days unmanned me; and then I thought it better not to intrude too hastily upon thy grief. In sooth, another week should have most likely passed, before I made this mournful visit; but accounts reached me of certain unwarranted acts

upon thy husband's part, which, as thy sole and absolute guardian, it is my bounden duty to restrain."

"I know not aught of what of late has passed, or even of what may now be passing. My thoughts are yonder," and she pointed to the vault before the window.

"I can well fancy your indifference, my child, to worldly matters;" said the old man; "but rumour flies—and I hear that the unhappy man you wedded, assumes rights, and wastes property, idly supposing that in right of his marriage with you, he has some power over your late father's property; and I have come hither specially to undeceive him. The morning of that sad evening, when your lamented father met his death—I look back upon it yet as but a dream—I witnessed the final disposition of his property. All, May, is left absolutely in your own power—and Musgrave's marital influence is utterly extinguished. There is a copy of the deed—the last document that your murdered parent ever laid a pen to."

"Would he had never left home upon the fatal errand. But thy will be done!" and the mourner meekly raised her eyes to heaven.

"May," said Mr. Cameron, as the guardian of the orphaned girl was called, "I must away to-morrow by times, to speed some business of mine own in Northumberland—and it would be prudent before I go, to warn thy prodigal and profligate lord, that he has no more power than the meanest hind upon thy property, and that for the food he eats and the clothing he may require, he must be indebted to thy charity. Hark! to that noisy burst of drunken revelry, and in the house that death has visited so awfully! 'Tis incredible in a Christian land, and it must be repressed. Send Janet, to that monster in the shape of man, and say that one desires to speak with him on important business."

The little bell upon the table was sounded, and a female attendant answered its summons from the ante-room.

"Go, Janet, tell Mr. Musgrave that my guardian would speak with him instantly. It is matter that will not brook delay."

The lady's tire-woman bowed and left the room.

I mentioned that a south-country stranger had arrived—a young and handsome gentle-

man ; and when he alighted in the court-yard, Musgrave and his red friend, the Highlander, were in deep conclave over a stoup of burgundy.

"The old carl had an indifferent good taste for wine," said Musgrave, as he sipped the liquor. "You say, Angus, that the job was troublesome?"

"Troublesome ! Call it by the right name—desperate," returned MacDougal. "Think ye that it was still daylight—a crowded wynd—on every flat a family—and yet to strike him to the heart, and pass into the street unchallenged and unnoticed—"

"Here's to thee, my stout friend. D—n me, we'll make the world wag merrily, so long as we can muster the broad pieces and retain the broad lands. How now, wench, what brings ye here?"

"I come," said the tire-woman, "to say that my mistress requests your presence instantly, and that her guardian has arrived."

"Part of thy message is bootless, and the other false," replied Musgrave, as he turned down a glass of burgundy. "I am engaged, and therefore cannot come. I am thy lady's guardian, and *ergo*—as they said at school—she

can have none save one. I would not intrude upon her grief at present ; it would only awake mine own afresh. Go !”

’Ere the attendant had closed the door, both scoundrels burst into a fit of laughter ; when a second servant interrupted their merriment, by announcing that a young gentleman desired an instant audience.

“ Who, or what is he ?”

“ That he will tell himself,” returned the voice of the person, as he entered the apartment and closed the door behind him. Advancing to the table, he coolly removed his hat.

“ By heaven ! exclaimed Musgrave and his companion together, “ it is Claudine Dubreton !”

CHAPTER XIV.

"CLAUDINE, what brought thee hither?" exclaimed Musgrave, as he gazed in astonishment on the pseudo gallant, who sported rapier and spur, and in bearing was insolent enough for a modern valet.

"What brings me! Dost thou ask it? Why I come to claim a loving husband. What brought me—was a smuggling lugger to Eymouth—and a post-horse from Berwick-upon-Tweed. Gad's mercy! I started from France in good time, too—for I hear that some kind friend nicked a throat that stood a little in the way, Will; and that a pint or two of blood has made thee lord paramount over all here."

"Claudine, be cautious: these words are dangerous. Thou must preserve a strict incognita—leave this house to-morrow, and—"

"Leave thee in quiet possession of thy new love and new estate. Not I, by heaven!" and the stranger struck the table. "No, Musgrave, I shared thy poverty until sheer starvation made me throw myself upon my kindred, for that support which thou could'st not supply me with. I passed a stormy ordeal, and now I'll bask me in the sunshine. Here am I—and here I shall remain."

"Leave us a while, MacDougal. I will explain to Claudine the uncertainty of my position. Then let her inquire of thee, and thy corroboration shall satisfy her that all I shall have stated is correct."

The red Highlander rose and quitted the apartment, and left the husband and wife together. Mutual recriminations passed—for the conduct of both had been censurable. Neither were burthened with a particle of principle. Musgrave urged necessity in plea of his transgression, and Claudine was ready to receive it in apology. Between the guilty, a moral lapse is easily reconciled—the wine passed freely—and ere half an hour had passed away, Claudine was seated on her husband's knee.

"And thou dost not, in honest truth then, love her, Musgrave?"

"Not I, by all the saints! I hated her from the first; her very smiles were sickening, and her kisses worse than poison."

"'Tis well," returned the lady; "I would not have tamely brooked a rival. I can hate as well as love; and had I found that thou had'st flung me off, and that passion and not poverty had caused it, this small phial would have avenged the insult."

"In the devil's name, what is it?" And Musgrave took a diminutive bottle in his hand, which Claudine had drawn from her bosom.

"The deadliest poison that ever the laboratory of an alchymist produced," was the reply. "Three drops are sufficient to destroy the strongest—and the victim will not carry life to the ground."

"By heaven! I hate drugs—not that I matter knife or pistolet were an enemy or a rival in the road. I'll put it aside. We'll only talk of love, Claudine, to-night; to-morrow we'll talk of business."

If ever Musgrave felt more strongly for one woman than another, it was for Claudine Dubre-

ton. She was as beautiful as bad ; and as she had opened the fastenings of her doublet, and the removal of her hat had allowed her profuse black hair to stream down her shoulders to the waist, the finely-formed throat and bosom appeared additionally white, from the contrast of the dark tresses which but partially concealed them. Her arm was round Musgrave's neck—her lips were pressed to his—when silently the door unclosed, and May Anderson and her guardian were standing at their side, before the guilty pair were apprized that the bolt of the lock had turned.

* * * *

When the insolent answer to her message was communicated to the lady of the mansion and her father's friend by the indignant tire-woman, a long deliberation ensued as to the course which appeared most prudential to pursue. Whether to quit the house herself, and repairing to the Scottish capital, there place herself under protection of the Courts—or expel Musgrave from Ashford, and employ legal force, if necessity required it, were points that were cautiously debated.

“On one point, May,” continued the old

gentleman, "my opinion is formed. The sooner this wretched profligate knows his true position the better; and I would counsel that, as he lacks courtesy to attend you, we repair at once together to the hall, and in the presence of his ruffian associate, of whom, touching your father's death, I harbour dark suspicions—at once apprise him that the imaginary rights of a husband must be exchanged for such eleemosynary bounty as, in thy charity, thou may'st be pleased to confer upon the outcast."

"I bow to thy judgment, Sir—and we will at once get over this painful, but prudent interview."

May Anderson imagined that she knew the full extent of her husband's worthlessness. She felt that her affections had been misplaced, her confidence abused, and she attributed the death of her father indirectly to the criminal career of the *roué* who had first won her love, and afterwards disdainfully rejected it. But that he would insult her by the introduction of a courtesan—mock the memory of her father, ere the grave had scarcely closed upon him—outrage every ordinance, human and divine—this thought never crossed her mind. When she descended,

the stairs, she was prepared to find him employed at the wine-cup with his profligate companion ; but when she saw him with a rival in his arms, without an attempt at concealment, in broad day, and in her own hall—that discovery was indeed astounding.

When a mild, enduring, disposition is roused by repeated injury to resentment, indignation may not be so violently expressed, but it will be more permanent than that of a fiery temper, easily excited, and as easily appeased.

“ Good God ! can I credit the evidence of my own senses ? ” exclaimed Mr. Cameron, recoiling back from the centre of the room ; “ and can human profligacy reach thus far ? ”

Claudine sprang from her lover’s knee, and hurrying to the window, hastily closed the doublet round her throat, and endeavoured to gather up her dishevelled tresses, and hide them beneath her riding cap—while Musgrave, astounded at the presence of her he had so fearfully deceived, was speechless. But, strange as it might appear, May Anderson retained her firmness through the scene.

“ And was this needed,” she said, in calm, deliberate accents, addressing the guilty man ;

“ was this needed to complete the measure of your villany? Would it not content you, under the false pretence of love, to win a too-confiding heart, and then lacerate it by unmerited neglect? Would it not suffice to destroy the peaceful happiness that reigned in this quiet dwelling—sadden the declining years of a loved parent with unavailing sorrow—and may Heaven pardon me if I wrong thee by the thought, cause by thy profligate proceedings a journey that proved fatal, if indeed thou didst not abet his murder. Thou would’st add insult too—and that under a roof where thy wretched dupe rules paramount. Ay, stare not, but mark the word well, paramount—absolute—sole mistress. Thou hast dared to introduce a thing unchaste, a wanton; one who feeling she has become a disgrace to woman, has, with woman’s purity, abandoned the very garb a woman wears. And this, too, in the presence of a wife! Infamous villain! thy wife knows, despises, and abandons thee!”

She turned, and was about to leave the room, when Claudine, whose excitable temper had been stimulated by the wine with which Musgrave and she had sealed their reconciliation, and irritated by the presence of one who had nominally usurped

her place, and expressed opinions which her guilty conscience would have admitted true, but which a proud, bad, woman like herself found, for that very cause, intolerable, sprang forwards from the window, and laid her hand upon the shoulder of the retiring lady. Starting, as if in contact with some reptile, May Anderson indignantly exclaimed :

“ Off, thou impure thing—thy touch is poisonous. Go—press these arms around that heart-struck felon—my honorable and respected husband will duly estimate thy chaste embrace. *I am but a wife.*”

“ Woman—thou art no wife, and *thou*, not I, art Musgrave’s *mistress*,” exclaimed Claudine with flashing eyes.

“ Ah ! what say’st thou ?” exclaimed Mr. Cameron.

“ The truth ! look there. He will not dare gainsay it. *I am his wife, and thou,*” and she looked contemptuously on poor May, “ *thou, pattern of purity ! art but his leman !*”

Musgrave’s was guilty courage. In a quarrel his blade was ready ; to cooler blood-shedding he had slight compunction, but the sudden discovery of his ruffian conduct, the consequences, penal

and pecuniary, which he knew must attend it—all struck home to his guilty soul;—and a man, generally remarkable for *hardiesse* and effrontery, seemed as if he had been paralyzed.

May Anderson, like one who questioned the evidence of her senses, leaned for support against a high-backed chair; while her guardian addressed the stranger.

“Let me understand thee correctly,” he said, “art thou in truth married to him? When did that ceremony take place? Where—”

Claudine impatiently interrupted him, and plucking a paper from her bosom, she put it into Mr. Cameron’s hand.

“There, read that document carefully, and in it all the information you require will be found.”

Musgrave, for the first time appeared to recover self-possession; he sprang from the chair and ejaculating “Claudine, thou hast ruined me, hurried from the chamber.

* * * *

There is an extent to which human resolution reaches which cannot be exceeded. The tension of the nerves, when overwrought, give way;

reaction succeeds, and hope and heart yield together. May Anderson bore up bravely while the full measure of Musgrave's villany was detected and confirmed. But, when she reached her private apartments, the woman returned—and the indignant feeling of outraged confidence, sank into the distress that one would feel, who had within so brief a space been called upon to lament the loss of a dead father, and worse still, a living husband. Mr. Cameron had instantly departed, to take prompt means to eject Musgrave from a place to which he had now no claim whatever; and while the ill-used lady gave way to grief that admitted no consolation in her own chamber—the ruffian who had foully dishonoured her of a maiden's fame, and invaded her father's "house of life," in the hall below, held secret conclave with his guilty companions. In this his hour of difficulty and frame of mind, two better emissaries of the arch-enemy of mankind could not have been found, for what Claudine would unscrupulously advise, MacDougal would as unscrupulously execute.

"Claudine," said Musgrave, as he filled a bumper to the brim, "I drink to thee—

nevertheless thou hast ruined us beyond redemption."

"Ay," said the red MacDougal, "touching that there can be little question. The thread we relied upon, thou hast severed. There was a noble stake to be won or lost, and fortunately and desperately the first throw came off. A little patience, a little management—these were only needed, and the ball would have rolled right. Damnation! thy cursed jealousy flung down the towering edifice, and the winning card passed directly into hands that won't throw away the advantage." He filled his glass. "Where shall we have a stoup this time to-morrow evening? Heaven knows where!"

"Why—why act so suddenly?" inquired Claudine. "There may be time to remedy a mistake."

"To remedy the devil!" returned the irritated Highlander. "Whatever chances we might have had of playing on that soft girl's feelings, or, at the worst, of carrying off property—it is over. Thou hast made him a felon"—he pointed to Musgrave—"a bigamist; 'twas all the old carl wanted. Musgrave, thanks to thy

folly, must off ere morning, or else he will be in Carlisle within the week—ay, and forwarded to the plantations, after the next judge comes round.”

“What means bigamy?” said Claudine sharply.

“It means,” replied the Highlander, “the crime a man commits, who has already a loving wife like thee, and intermarries with another. All necessary to establish his guilt, is the evidence which thou hast effectually supplied. Well, where will lie the profit of this feat? Thou hast, certes, for the present, the honour of a pauper husband—and May Anderson will soon replace the loss—for fifteen thousand English pounds do not go long a begging on the Border; and May is as free as air.”

“Must both wives be alive?” asked Claudine.

“Yes. How else could a man have two?”

“And would the removal of one of them avert the penal consequences?” inquired the lady.

“Undoubtedly,” returned the Highlander.
“Evidence were in that case wanted. Art thou

sleeping, Musgrave? By Heaven! I think all thy energies are gone. The business might yet be remedied."

"No, no," returned the wretched man; "it is too late—too late. The sheriff and his followers will be here no doubt, to-morrow, and then—"

"What then?" asked MacDougal.

"Just what thou predicted a minute since."

"To convict for bigamy it seems, both wives must be alive. Might not one die suddenly? Ha!"

"No—no—no. The father—the father—that was enough. But—but—self-preservation—yes! that is a safe argument. Angus, my friend, wilt thou?" and he paused.

"Will I do what?" replied the Highlander.

"There is a room at the end of the gallery up stairs—and once within it; and—and—"

"You would murder again by proxy," said MacDougal with a sneer. "Not I, by the living Lord! I struck for thee the boldest stroke that ever Auld Reekie witnessed. I'll no more of it. No!—An thou can'st not save thyself, why—"

"Musgrave!" exclaimed Claudine passionately, "when I knew thee first, thou used to brave it with the best. Thou crossed blades with Melmonte and d'Aubigny; and two more noble swordsmen France could not produce. Art thou *distract*—impotent of mind? In the devil's name, what has bewitched thee?"

'Tis said that the enemy of man is ever in attendance when evoked by the wicked, and ready to confirm the guilty purpose of the desperate wretch who hesitates. The contemptuous remarks of his guilty friend and mistress roused the latent demon which only slumbered in the felon breast of Musgrave, and springing from his chair he exclaimed:

"'Tis necessity—that knows no law, and I obey!"

His evil genius lent his aid, and hurried the consummation of the foul deed. May, whose firmness had been so remarkable in the hall, altogether gave way when she found herself in her chamber. She wept—became hysterical—and at last swooned away.

"Run!" cried the tire-woman to a young attendant, "bring wine here instantly."

The girl flew down the stairs—rushed into the hall—told that her mistress had fainted—and demanded a glass of wine.

“Ah!” said Claudine in a whisper, “now hast thou a safe opportunity. Half-a-dozen drops. Thou hast the phial; and I will amuse the girl for a moment. ’Tis but a moment’s work! Courage! an a spark of manhood rests with thee!”

’Twas said—’twas done. The trembling criminal poured into the wine-glass more of the lethal drug than would have robbed twenty of their lives. The unconscious girl rushed from the room with the fatal draught. A minute after a scream was heard—May Anderson was dead!

* * * *

What advantages the guilty party hoped to reap by the commission of this diabolic act is not known, nor had they time allowed to turn the murder to account. Ere the corpse of her whose life had been so ruthlessly taken was cold, and while the criminals were still carousing in the hall, the house was surrounded by the *posse committatus* of the county; and Mr. Cameron, attended by the sheriff and his officers, entered,

and arrested Musgrave and his companions. Dreadful was the shock, when her guardian heard that May Anderson was already dead.

"Great God! more murder!" exclaimed the old man. "Seize that fiend in human form;" and he pointed to the trembling wretch, who was instantly secured.

In the agitation of mind which attended the commission of the dreadful deed, the felon had lost all self-possession, and instead of destroying what would prove an evidence of guilt, he incautiously replaced the phial in his pocket. There it was discovered—and no doubt it would have led to a criminal conviction, had not circumstances prevented the intervention of the law.

It was too late to remove the offenders to Berwick jail, and they were placed for the night in separate apartments, and under a sufficient guard. Early next morning the guilty wretches were demanded by the sheriff. Claudine and MacDougal were instantly produced—but on entering the room where Musgrave had been confined, the body of the wretch was found stiff and cold, suspended by his point-lace cravat from a spike, which had been driven into

the wall to support a mirror. They buried him in a hillock within sight of the house, which is still called "the Murderer's know."

The ways of Providence are inscrutable; for although no human eye witnessed the death of Mr. Anderson, a chain of circumstances brought the foul deed home to the wretch who had committed it, and he was hanged in the Grass-market of Edinburgh. Claudine was turned upon the world in abject poverty, and, as tradition goes, she died miserably of disease and hunger.

"Noo, Colonel," pursued the salmon-fisher, "do ye think yon hoose can be ony thing but unchancy? As sure as you are sittin' there, an' as I am puing this cobble,—the night I was daffin' with my Jo—she that's my wifey noo—Will Musgrave came to the door."

A fact so incontrovertible, even Sir Robert Bramble would scarcely controvert; and I agreed with honest Jock in opinion, that a room where a murderer has hanged himself is not the most suitable locality for an amatory interview; and that if lovers wish that their *têtes-à-tête* should escape interruption, they had better choose another apartment to keep tryste in.

CHAPTER XV.

I HAVE neither right, reason, or authority to curse railroads. Idle as I am, and a man in worldly affairs "of no estimation," still I have found their advantage. I never smarted from speculation—I was too poor to play the director, and too principled—thank Heaven—to enter into Stag Alley operations. My withers, are consequently, unwrung; but yet I must take a liberty to inquire, whether there was any particular clause in the Act of Parliament of the Newcastle and Edinburgh line, that authorized the said company to let a bridge fall twice, and spoil the whole trout fishing in the Ey? Never, indeed, was destruction more complete. This beautiful little stream where, but three years since, I filled my pannier frequently, is now tortured from its course, and half its best

pools left waterless—while the falling of the bridge introduced such a quantity of fresh lime into the stream, that for miles down the river, dead and dying trouts were taken up by hundreds. I suppose by this time the railroad mania has reached Pandemonium, as in two or three years the London fashions reach Spittal, where polkas—those exploded enormities—are now considered quite “the go” by the Border beauties, who annually ornament that salubrious watering-place. Well, if there be infernal committees, and a projected line across the Styx—and should Izaak Walton be a member, and not like that great patriot Smith O’Brien, be contumacious and in the cellar, I would recommend the said Izaak, if he values subterranean angling, to look sharp to bridge-masonry, or Styx may be made another Ey.

At the Reston station, I quitted the train to embark myself and personal effects in the Dunse “patent safety coach;” albeit, I could discover no particular security in a couple of kicking wheelers, and a leader—unicorn—who, by the coachman’s admission, was regularly down once a week. But although we had now and then a horse’s leg or two over a trace, the leader—

glory to the Prophet!—kept upon his pins ; and, as Pan very pleasantly sings in Midas—

“ Luck’s the best tune in life’s tol-de-rol-lol ! ”

we had luck upon our side, and reached Dunse our destination, in safety.

“ I never saw, during a drive of a dozen miles, a country that bore such marked indications of a healthy state of society as that between the town and the railroad. The outline is expansive, and from the coach box the eye ranged over twenty square miles of surface. The tillage lands were beautifully cultivated, the plantations clean and flourishing, and where the champaign changed to hill, the brown surface of the heath was thickly spotted with white fleeces, and told that every acre was turned to advantage. I never passed through a denser population than the village where we changed horses presented. The children came to the doors by dozens ; but not a ragged urchin could be seen—nor a sickly face was discoverable. There was not a cottage in the drive that did not bear unequivocal marks of comfort—and I can safely assert that I did not see an individual to whom I should have found myself warranted

in offering a sixpence. It was a Saint's day, and I thought upon ould Ireland. What there, were the finest pisantry on earth about? Some drinking in a potheeine-house, and more of them "stritchin' on the bed;" while here, the heretical population estimated the Saint's festival no more than it had been a sweep's holiday. The men were at the plough; the women plied the hoe; the larger children were weeding, and all this upon the birthday of a gentleman who had been canonized some centuries ago. Yet Heaven withheld its thunderbolts—and I uttered with Dominie Sampson, "Prodigious!"

Dunse is a quiet, sleepy, prosperous-looking place, without manufactures, and dependant on an agricultural population. All that can induce a man to take his ease in his inn was there—supper, sleeping-room, breakfast—cheap and excellent. At nine next morning I started for the upper district of the Lammermuir—and at ten, my Phaeton, who drove the gig, pulled up at a lone caravanserai, occasionally resorted to by anglers, gentlemen who are called geologists—from carrying leather-bags and hammers—and persons in the botanical line, generally supplied with spectacles, I suppose expecting by mecha-

nical assistance to find strange weeds, as Diogenes looked for an honest man by candlelight.

He who remains at home sees nothing, hears nothing, and enters the grave as he entered the world—knowing nothing. Now here is an hostelrie among the hills, and yet its inmates are not without interest. The host—a retired soldier, and on the fullest scale of pension—commenced life in the regiment he left at forty-six; he was in fact, born in it—and never being size or shape for the musket, he commenced his career upon the fife, and ended it a bassoon-player. Jack was in seventeen actions, and never got a scratch—for regiments never carry their musicians into fire; but he nevertheless looks respectable, for he wants his left eye—that being removed in Edinburgh, by a blackguard boy flinging a broken brick at another. His helpmate is a sturdy Highland woman, of active habits and unintelligible dialect; his daughter, or rather step-daughter—for the old lady has been three or four times at the hymeneal altar—is cultivated and poetical. She repeats passages from the *Elegant Extracts*, and denounces Burns as incorrect, and Byron as *monotonious*. She has constructed a hymn, two sonnets, and

an acrostic ; they have been much admired, and I presume with justice. But, like the fair Imogen, " I swear by the Virgin," that if Miss MacFie ever obtrudes a stanza upon me, whether the hour be—

" Moonless midnight, or matin prime,"

I'll cut her and the house incontinently.

My arrival has dispelled the poetic reveries of this modern Sappho ; and Miss MacFie is off to Dunse on a Highland shelty and at full gallop, on the unromantic errand of bringing out a joint of " butcher meat" for my dinner. Fancy yourself encountering a young lady who had recently penned a sonnet and perpetrated a hymn, charging along the Queen's high-road at a Waterloo pace, with a leg of mutton in the same hand, which had just now left the crow-quill !

There is an unhappy-looking man hoeing cabbages " ben the hoose":—that is the ex-bassoon player, who, it is evident, holds his life merely by his lady's sufferance. Mrs. MacFie, like a bull in a china shop, has decidedly every thing her own way ; and in Gaelic and English—or rather what I presume to be one of the unknown

tongues—is engaged indoctrinating a red-haired lassie with bare legs, in domestic duties, her own hands resting upon hips whose amplitude affords them full accommodation. Well, I'll toddle up the water and if I don't kill trouts, kill time; and, as I have a score of letters to answer, that task will consume the evening.

As the Cheviots are celebrated for the flavour of its mutton, the Lammermuir is famed for that of its honey. There scarcely a cottage meets the eye which has not a large stock of bees; and, in a garden before a shepherd's house I passed *en route* to the muckle-hole, I reckoned six-and-thirty skeps,* whose little tenants were in fine health, and full activity.

The rules of art in angling, as in war, are frequently found to be mere fallacies. On a former visit to the Lammermuir, I went a mile up the river one evening to the valley where the Dy joins the Whitadder, and in two pools, and within a few hundred yards of the junction of the streams, killed ten pounds' weight of healthy trouts—I name the weight, for generally the fish taken here, average but a small figure;—indeed a herring-size may be set down as among

* A hive.

the largest. But occasionally much larger trouts are taken ; ay, even ranging to four pounds—certainly few and far between—but those of one, two, and even three pounds are not unfrequent. On that occasion, I remember that at the Muckle-hole,* I had at one time three trouts upon my casting-line, and landed the whole three ; but this evening they reject me and my flies altogether, and my most indefatigable attempts to please are returned with a slap of the tail. A herd-boy has just come down the river, and, with a worm, has killed seventeen !—“Think of that, Master Brooke !”

But here comes my friend, the guager, the best practical fisherman on Teviot, Till, or Tweed. He is working with the minnow ; and all he has basketed in a six miles' walk, is some half-dozen,—most of them certainly well-sized : but what of that ? Their united weight would not turn three pounds : and I have seen his forty-pound pannier of an evening, when the lid would not close upon it !

After a two hours' walk, I returned to mine inn. Evening grey came on—“The feast was over,” not in Branhholm Tower, but in the

* Large.

hostelrie of Mrs. Martha MacFie—a glass of whiskey-toddy smoking at my elbow; my *portefeuille* unlocked—the paper ready to “speed the soft intercourse from soul to soul;” if, like the fair poetess below, I did anything in the sentimental line—the pen—I eschew steel ones—nibbed critically—and, like a ready-writer, I was about to commence epistolary operations. All was in quiet and repose—the rivulet murmured its way down the glen, to offer its tribute to the Whitadder; and there was a hum of bees, and a tapping of the bassoon-player’s hoe. But these were soothing sounds, and in fit keeping with the loneliness of a dwelling remote from noise and mankind. Here, a Bishop might have composed a homily, or the member for ——shire arranged his maiden speech. I felt the dreamy influence of solitude—and ceased to marvel that, in a locality so favourable to poesy and romance, the mantle of Sappho had descended on the shoulders of Miss Anna Maria MacFie. I never in my life was in the mood sentimental, that the devil did not take especial care to interrupt it; and manifold as the devices of the evil one are reputed to be, never did he out of malice aforethought, select

such demoniac means for demolishing the peace of mind of an elderly gentleman—for ere the grey-goose quill had affixed the final K to “My dear Jack,” one blast of an accordion annihilated my mental serenity. Only imagine Anna Maria, whose musical acquirements are still in the bud, and separated from me only by a boarded partition, groping out the first part of “Will you come to the bower!” Heaven pardon me if I sinned—but I altered the line to “Will you go to the devil!” But what was to be done? Was I to submit to martyrdom, and have the sheriff-substitute of Berwickshire announce to the world, that I had been shuffled out of it, by the visitation of an accordion? If I must die, I would die like a man—and throwing the window open, I summoned the landlord, who laid down his hoe and promptly obeyed the call. I appealed to him as a bassoon-player, and on the score of all that was human and musical—implored him to save me. There were many deadly inventions which I pointed out; Shrapnell shells, prussic acid, Fulton’s torpedo, and Warner’s long-range; but what were any or all, in effect to be compared to the slow, but certain death produced by an accordion? He

has vanished ; that infernal nuisance is abated ; but I have preserved life at the expense of Miss MacFie's "wreathed smiles," as a contemptuous toss of the head, with a renewed glass of toddy too plainly indicated. Well, glory to the Prophet ! I am safe from a second invitation "to the bower," or even the infliction of a sonnet.

The day promised to be cloudy, and tempted by skyey appearances, though the water was far "too fine," I put faith in the clouds and ventured forth. Had I been a railroad dupe, I could not have been more effectually humbugged ; for, before I had made a half hour's march to the Black Pool, and put my rod together, out came the sun gloriously, scattering from his presence every cloud that had presumed to occupy the heavens. The Waltonian alternative was only left me—patience, to wit—so I unjointed my rod, wound my flies around my hat, and then sate down to muse upon the vanity of an angler's hopes and expectations, beside as bright a run of water as flows through the Lammermuir.

The stream elbowed at my side, and formed a circling hole ; and though in places it might

be six feet deep, it was so pellucid, that there was not a pebble whose colours I could not tell distinctly. I amused myself for a time in looking at the rushing of the small trouts—for the larger and more respectable members of that community were reposing under bank and stone—when suddenly the pool was filled with minnows, varying in size from a quarter-inch to half a finger's length. As to their numbers, that set computation at defiance altogether—for I am certain that, big and little, at one time, ten thousand were clearly visible. No wonder with such a commissariate, that the Whitadder and Dy trouts are so superior to those generally taken in mountain streams. Every angler knows, that a generous soil is as necessary to turn out a well-conditioned trout, as to fatten a beeve or finish a wedder. Hence, at the mouth of a drain, or the tail of a mill-race, you find invariably the best-fed fish. I saw this more thoroughly marked some years ago in Ireland—and it would appear that artificial, as well as natural feeding agrees with trouts, as well as oil-cake does with oxen. A friend of mine had a fishing cottage literally on the lake's verge, and as the kitchen abutted on the water,

the *débris* of his *cuisine* were piped into the water. At its *débouché*, if you could throw a fly that had temptation—for as the fish reposing there were above the necessity of taking insects, and indeed of taking exercise—it was most difficult to induce them to get up—but could you coax one of the indolent ruffians to rise, his figure was generally a curiosity. Like a Glasgow baillie, he was broad as he was long,—and in gastronomic comparison as far above his lean and dandy-shaped companions in the opposite reeds, as a civic counsellor to a Highland gilly. This excellent fall back, therefore, upon the devoted minnows, will readily account for the excellence of condition which the Whitadder and Dy trouts possess over the finny inhabitants of the ordinary mountain streams.

Even though this may be considered as “the low country,” still in winter these muirs are most difficult to traverse; for after a fall of rain, nothing can be more tiresome than the yielding soil which meets your shoe at every step. I would freely undertake to walk twenty miles of sound heather, rather than five of the nondescript character of the Lammermuir. You cannot call it road, for with every second fur-

long you get into a gated field. In these wastes you are honourably expected and bound to "sneck the yet,"* and considering the mischief that the sheep and cattle might inflict, no man of good feeling should or would on this point be careless. Here, wilful damage is never committed—and crime is almost unknown. At times there is a little poaching with the gun and leister;† but life and property are perfectly secure—and nothing may be dreaded but "winter and bad weather."

But, at these sad seasons, on the Lammermuir the proprietors of cattle have severe visitations. From a know‡ which commanded an expansive prospect, the herdsman pointed out four farms, on each of which in the severe snow-storms of the years 1837 and 1838, from twenty to thirty scores of sheep had perished—making in round numbers, a total loss of twelve hundred, and that within the range of sight. "I dinna name the sma loss," said the shepherd, "but were they taken ower the muir in twas, an threes, an twantys, they would have reached muckle mair than the big yuns."

* Close the gate.

† A fish-spear.

‡ Hillock.

Heavy as these losses are to which the farmers in this hill country are exposed, it is too frequently accompanied by loss of human life. In the upper Lammermuir, the houses are in some places four miles apart—the connecting road a pathway, or a mere beaten track, undefined by fence or hedge. Hence, the first shower of snow obliterates any wheel-marks which could guide the stranger—and even the herdsman's practised eye is sometimes hardly taxed to enable him to find his route. I asked Sandy had many of these accidents happened within his memory?

“Oh, yes!” he replied, “I lost my ain feyther when a bairn. It was in the great storm of the fourteen (1814),* and his body was na found for nine weeks after, an then it

* The duration of the successive snow-storms of this remarkable winter and spring, will be best illustrated by an electioneering anecdote. On the 24th of December, the writ to elect a knight of the shire, arrived at Castlebar; and on the 26th, the celebrated Mayo contest commenced, which lasted, I think, ninety days! During this protracted scene of riot, only six or eight of the Montagues and Capulets were absolutely killed; the “kilt,” i. e., the maimed, of course were a legion; and

was his ain doggie that hokit it oot fra underneath the sna."

"You met, my friend, with a severe loss," I said in reply.

"I did, Sir; but mair was tynt than him. The finest lad that ever laid brogue on heather perished the same evening. Mony a strapping youth these glens ha sent till the wars; but naer did sae fine a laddie quit his mither's sheeleen, as puir Wolly Forster was."

My curiosity was excited, and I sate down upon a rock, pulled out my flask, warmed the shepherd with a drappie, the said drappie occupying the tin drinking-cup attached to the canteen, and which contains three wine-glasses of honest calibre. Sandy's narrative had interest for me. The tale was told where it had occurred, and it also carried with it other associations—for Willy Forster's regiment had been in my own brigade, in the glorious wind-up of the Peninsular campaigns—and, as the Highlanders say, we had probably fought "shoulder

the cause assigned for the coroner having so little employment, was, that as the snow lay the whole time of the contest, the mobs not being able to obtain stones, were obliged to pelt each other with snow-balls!

to shoulder." Even in that thought there is a communion of feeling—a military freemasonry—that none but a soldier can feel or appreciate.

I shall merely give a sketch, rather than a detail of the Shepherd's Story.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SHEPHERD'S STORY.

IN yonder glen that opens at the bending of the river, you can still trace the ruined walls of a cottage and cattle-steading, and perceive, from the furrowed surface of the land beside them, that it once had been cultivated, and formed a herdsman's croft. For more than thirty years, however, the valley has been deserted—some say because better-sheltered folds and sheeleens were elsewhere found, while others attribute its abandonment to the superstition of the mountain hinds, who objected to occupy a place, which they looked upon as being unlucky.

It was war-time—and every corner of the British island furnished their supplies to those who bled freely in foreign lands, and kept

the battle at a distance. The militia ballot was then in operation—and many a youth whom softer ties and family affections would have retained at home, was unexpectedly called away. The herdsman who occupied the ruined cottage which you see had two sons. Reuben was twenty-two, a strong, well-formed, low-sized mountaineer. Donald was three years younger—and was admitted by universal consent, to be the finest lad within the wide scope of the Lammermuir.

Reuben loved happily, for he won the woman whom he loved—and she was the only daughter of a wealthy herdsman. Wealth must be considered by comparison ; and Alice Johnson was a wealthy bride, for she brought him fifty sheep and bedding and napery* to furnish out a cottage. Jealousy will even find its way into a moorland glen—and many a young mountaineer envied the good fortune of Reuben Johnstone.

Alas ! how soon worldly prosperity may be alloyed by some unexpected visitation !—Ere the bridal moon had waned, news reached the glen that Reuben Johnstone was drawn in the militia.

* House-linen.

Donald was absent in the hills, when the sad intelligence reached yon ruined cottage. He had left a happy family that morning—the old couple were comfortable and contented—Reuben had wooed and won his Jo—and Alice had obtained the youth of her affections. Great, therefore, was the surprise of the young herdsman on returning to his evening meal, to find a family he had left in smiles, now overwhelmed with sorrow.

“What means this grief?” exclaimed the mountaineer.

“Alas ! Donald,” replied the old dame, “puir Reuben’s drawn for a sodger, and he maun gang across the saas, an leave his bonny bride.”

The young shepherd looked for a moment at Alice, who had hidden her face in her apron to conceal grief she could not conquer.

“No !” exclaimed the youth passionately, “Reuben shall bide at hame, gin they will but tak me in his stead.”

* * * *

It is unnecessary to say, that when Donald presented himself at the head-quarters of the

regiment, and offered himself as a substitute for his brother, that he was gladly accepted. His was not a spirit to remain at home, when the Highland tartans were waving on a battle-field. He volunteered the first turn-out; and ere a twelvemonth had elapsed, he who had been herding sheep upon the Lammermuir, had won a corporal's stripes upon the red field of Albuera.

And yet it was with an aching heart that Donald bade a long farewell to his native valley. If "love rules the court, the camp, the grove," he is as despotic in the Highland strath. Donald loved—but hopeless was his passion—for wealth and position united, told him he must love in vain.

Mary Hay was the minister's only child, and the minister was reputed richer than Scottish churchmen generally are—while Mary was the sweetest girl on the Borders. She was just sixteen when Donald left his native glen. With him it had been secret and distant adoration—he "never told his love"—but many a wreath of wild flowers Mary had found on the holly-bush before her window, and yet she never

knew the hand that placed them there. But when young Donald went to be a soldier, these faery favours ceased.

Three years had rolled away—a second child occupied the care of Alice Johnstone—and both at the cottage and the manse, all was well and prosperous. It was a fine Sabbath-day, and at Abbey Saint Bathans,

“Long, loud, and deep, the bell had toll’d,
Which summoned sinful man to pray.”

In the beautiful simplicity of Scottish worship, the mountain congregation were engaged, when the kirk-door opened—and a young man, who might have sate to a painter as the very impersonation of a Highland soldier, advanced up the aisle. Although his air and bearing were altogether changed by military setting-up, still there were two present who recognised him at a glance—his fond mother, and one who had loved him, although she did not know it herself—and she was Mary Hay.

Donald’s was a short furlough. He had come back humbly but honourably distinguished—for three chevrons on his arm told that he had risen to a sergeant’s rank. Warm was

his welcome among the young herdsmen with whom he had always been a favourite; and many a female heart fluttered when the waving tartans of the handsome Highlander were seen, as he joined her in a muirland stroll, or sate beside her on broomy bank or heathery know. Short as his leave of absence was, it was still further abridged—for Donald was suddenly called off to join a large reinforcement which was about to sail for the Peninsular to recruit the Highland regiments. The evening before his departure, he walked down to the manse to bid the minister farewell—such was the errand he announced—but had the secret of his heart been known, it was to look his last upon one whom the chances of war might probably never allow him to look upon again.

Mr. Hay was absent, and Mary was alone. What passed can only be conjectured. Both hearts were full, and accident disclosed the mutual secret—their troth was interchanged, and moonlight was streaming over hill and streamlet ere Donald could tear himself away.

A year passed—news came of “foughten fields,” and the Pyrenees no longer set bounds to British gallantry. Victory followed Wellington,

and the tide of success which commenced on the Agueda, only terminated on the banks of the Garonne. Donald had "escaped the slaughter," and nobly distinguished himself, for he had now attained that honourable rank—which professional ability and exemplary conduct only can command—of sergeant-major. Hitherto fortune had befriended him; and, in the sanguinary conflicts which had occurred from Vittoria to Toulouse, the lover of Mary Hay had been unscathed. At the last battle—and oh! what a wanton expenditure of human blood it was—he had, however, been severely wounded, and his recovery was doubtful at first, and afterwards most tedious.

In the interval which elapsed from the night when Donald parted from his mistress, several suitors had sought the hand of Mary Hay, and been modestly but decidedly refused. All of them were favoured with her father's approbation—and the continued rejections of their addresses, led to suspicions and subsequent inquiry, which elicited a candid avowal of her engagement with the absent soldier. Mary's happiness was a superior consideration to worldly

ones. Donald bore an unblemished reputation, and had won by his gallantry and good-conduct an honourable name. Mr. Hay yielded to his daughter's request—and Donald was apprized that a parent's approval had been obtained, and that his course of love would now run smooth.

The reduction of the military establishment of Britain, which followed the abdication of Napoleon, allowed all who were not perfectly serviceable to be pensioned and discharged. In that number, Donald was included; and in the middle of December, he quitted the colours under which he had fought and bled, and set out for his native valley,

“ With war's red honours on his crest,
To clasp his Mary to his breast.”

His voyage across channel was prosperous, and on the 28th of December, he quitted the mail-coach road, and sought “the Moorland wild,” where love was waiting to welcome him with open arms.

Before he had proceeded a mile, the snow, which had for a while treacherously abated only to come on with additional fury, fell thickly—

and the wind increasing to a storm, sent it drifting furiously across the moors. Donald, weakened by his wounds, was ill-prepared to stand against the tempest. Night and darkness came; every trace which could indicate the road, had long since disappeared, and the feeble soldier lost the track, and wandered in a wrong direction. Strength failed—sleep probably overcame him—and next morning the finest youth



DEATH OF DONALD.

the Lammermuir had produced for a century, was found lifeless beneath the stone-dyke of a pen-fold.

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They laid him in the church-yard of Saint Bathans. The wailing bag-pipes, the roll of musketry, did not announce that a gallant soldier, now

“ Slept the sleep that knows not breaking,”

but the tears of every mountain maid for miles around, moistened poor Donald's grave.

Mary Hay never raised her head. They brought her to Edinburgh, in the vain hope that leechcraft and change of scene might cure a broken heart. As the first spring flowers peeped through the heather, a hearse, attended by a crowd of mourners, was seen wending through the glen that leads to the ancient Abbey. Resting upon it, a coffin, exhibiting the white crape which typified the virgin purity of her whose remains were hastening to the narrow house, was seen. It bore a short but touching inscription—

“ MARY HAY, ANNO ÆTATIS, NINETEEN.”

They laid her beside him whom she loved in life—and the flower of Lammermuir reposes close to as brave a soldier, as ever pressed Highland brogue upon a battle-field.

CHAPTER XVII.

SOMEBODY says that misfortune introduces men to strange bed-fellows. Without one particle of bad luck, the Lammermuir will do the same for any gentleman, who has no objection to be boxed up with a fellow traveller for the night. We Irish consider such arrangements as appertaining to the barbarities of a century gone by; but in these wild districts, men who never had seen each other in their lives, are stuck into the same berth;—for in the mountain country, the sleeping-places are berths, not beds.

Desirous of working my way to the upper district of these sweet and romantic hills, I found upon inquiry, that I had reached the last house that professed to entertain a traveller. Up the glens, few and far between—I should occasionally meet a shepherd's sheeleen—but

they were too limited to afford accommodation to an humbler way-farer than I appeared to be. Indeed, nothing can be on a ruder, or more limited scale than these abiding-places. They approximate the Irish cabin closely, only that they are lighted with glass windows, furnished with chimneys, doors, and a roof impervious to the weather—while the cattle have sod-walled huts, and not “the run of the kitchen,” as in the land of saints. Were his house more comfortable, the Highland herdsman would have little time to enjoy it; for a person who has not rambled through the Lammermuir and Cheviots, can little imagine the severe and never-ending business of a pastoral life in Highland regions like these.

Excepting to obtain shelter during a few hours of hasty sleep, the shepherd seldom sees his home from sunrise to sunset. He must be afoot before his flock, and he never leaves them till they have settled and laid down for the night. His meals are generally brought him in the hills—and the more severe the weather, the more imperative he finds it to be out of doors, to keep his flock together. In a word, a shepherd's life may be very pretty and poetical in

Arcadia, but a Cheviot Tytyrus has other fish to fry, than piping like a bull-finch, or playing "love among the roses" with some Daphne or Amarylidis, in full costume as Fentum turns out his shepherdesses for Jullien's *bal masqué*, with a straw hat, ribbons that would supply a recruiting party, crook in hand, and every thing complete, barring the lamb.

I ascertained, however, that there was a farm-house of more extensive dimensions, in a glen some eight miles up the hills ; that the owner was kind and hospitable ; and that I might manage to put in a day or two well enough, as there were some fine pools in the river, and a tarn in the muir in which the dark-mountain trouts were abundant. It would be necessary however, to look to the commissariate before I commenced my pilgrimage—for the larder at Crag-More could not always be depended on. Miss MacFie prepared accordingly a basket of viands, and Sandy bawn* has literally loaded himself with whisky—that pleasant fluid being, as he averred, the best letter of introduction to a Highlander.

There had been a sharp spaight two days before :—we found the pools in fine order,—and

* Fair Sandy.

beside the numerous bottles Sandy carried in a hand-basket, I filled the creel upon his back with trouts—and a little fuller I suspect, than he found quite agreeable.

We reached our destination before sunset—and found the house already occupied by three cattle-jobbers returning from a lamb-fair in the upper moor, and pleasantly engaged at our entrance, in discussing a frying-pan-full of savoury bacon and poached eggs. They were of the Dandy Dinmont order, but of far inferior grade in appearance—thin, hardy, whisky-drinking men—each provided with a heavy-handed thonged whip, and accompanied by a terrier or sheep-dog.

I was warmly welcomed, and Sandy took care most pompously to announce my rank ; for it is marvellous how far a name goes in obtaining respect even in these wild hills. I looked around the kitchen ; it was a large unceiled room, with three bulkheads or bedsteads, built up against the back wall ; tables, and chairs, and milk vessels, and churns ; pots, pans, and kettles ; the whole in chaotic confusion.

There were hanging from the rafters, a goodly store of bacon, sundry dried salmon, who no

doubt had felt the leister ;* huge balls of spun worsted for making clothing for the family ; and a hundred articles beside, indigenous only to a shepherd's kitchen.

The master of the house was a hale, stout, sexagenarian ; his wife, some ten years younger, a stout, but comely gentlewoman ; and his daughters, the pledges of married love, "two bonnie lassies," some year each, over and under twenty. There is a grandchild too, an early orphan ; it is the sole issue of an unhappy marriage, contracted by their eldest daughter, widowed at twenty-three and now obliged to seek a service.

Nothing can be simpler than the arrangement of this dwelling. It is partitioned into two rooms, a parlour, and the kitchen just described. A huge peat-fire was on my advent, immediately placed in the chimney of the grand chamber ; which to judge by its vaulty smell, is a ceremony that is but annually performed. I feasted, drank, partitioned a bottle of whisky among the family and guests, who had now, that night had rendered their

* Been poached.

services unnecessary, received an addition of five sheep-dogs. Sundry yawns—but not till after the last drop of alcohol had vanished—were interchanged among the drovers—and I rose and walked into the state apartment, intimating that I too was ready to retire.

In half an hour, one of the lassies came in, and told me that my bed was “aw right.” In what undiscovered crypt was my person to be, *scottice*, disposed? I followed Jessie into the kitchen; and there the company had made brief toilets. The host, his lady, and the two-year-old, were ensconced in the crib, next the fire—in that next the door, three heads, a red, a black, and a grey, were laid upon the pillow—but the centre box was untenanted.

“That bed’s for you, Colonel,” said the lady of the mansion, raising herself bolt upright, and perfectly oblivious that her night garment would be greatly improved by a button or two. “I chose it for ye. It’s na too near the fire, nor yet ahint the door, ye ken. Ye’ll find it unco snug.”

“And, Madam,” I said, horrified, at the idea of suffocation, are these two young ladies to be my companions—or only one of them?”

“Na, na, na,” returned the matron. “Ye’ll hae it a to yeersel—the lassies sleep ben the hoose.”

I entered a gentle protest against disturbing them, and it was finally settled that the fire in the great chamber should be heaped anew, a shakedown made upon the floor, and all and every, sleeping or waking, should have a *doch*



RUDE DORMITORY.

an durris—and, while the lassies were arranging my bed, a fresh cork was extracted, and

from crib to crib, I passed along and administered the alcohol.

It was marvellous to see with what facility the company despatched the whisky. In return for fried bacon and general hospitality, each of the drovers had come provided with flasks which held a quart, and every drop of their contents had been duly expended. But still they were quite delighted with the evening offering I had made—while to my horror and surprize, his grandmama, turned half a wine glass full of undiluted whisky down the throat of the two-year-old, and the imp never winced. Presently, my room was announced ready, and I retired for the night.

I am morally convinced that every member of the kitchen company, from the time the drovers arrived until the landlord finally reposed his red kilmarnock on the pillow, had an honest flask of pure undiluted whisky under their respective belts—and yet they are all up, merry as crickets, and off this morning at cock-crow.

The quantity of raw alcohol these Borderers can drink is marvellous. In their cups they are noisy and argumentative; fond of song-

singing and shaking hands ; and though they will shatter your nerves without compunction by halloing " Auld lang syne," the only injury they will advisedly inflict, will be an attempt to force you to swallow whisky whether you will or not.

I must be off ;—I never knew until now that there was half the misery in the world that there is. In the reproduction of the animal and human race, this seems to be the weaning district. That cherub, who swallowed the whisky last night, is being weaned, and he continually doth cry. The theme of every man that stops, whether to light his pipe or feed his horse, is the risk and trouble of severing the lambs from the ewes :—and this moment, a weanling foal popped his head through the only pane of glass in my window, which had not a previous crack or a bull's-eye in it !—Wind sharp at east—no joke ! I'll back to Mr. MacFie's, for I think I have gotten his woman-kind in tolerable order. He, " good, easy man," was no assistance ; for although he might have been first bassoon upon the Peninsular, he plays but second fiddle on the Lam-

mermuir. His lady is white-sergeant. "God help the wake!" as they say in Ireland: he has nothing left for him, but to hoe his cabbages, receive his daily bread, and bend to the will of Allah: or rather—to that of Mistress MacFie.

* * *

A gentleman, "rather the worse of liquor," with a bridle in his hand, disturbed the tranquillity of the MacFies, and interrupted my repose this morning, at the unseasonable hour of four, A.M. Like Commodore Trunnion, when conveying his dying instructions to Jack Hatchway, this unknown guest had "a ripple in his speech," and the account he gave of himself was consequently, by no means as plain, and much less satisfactory than young Norval's. He had arrived, it appeared, on horseback the night before, and departed "*à cheval*" after an early breakfast attended by a muirland gilly, in search of the picturesque, and to collect mountain plants to form a *hortus siccus*. Would that he had kept his thrapple like his *hortus*—dry; but here he is ere cock-crow, complaining, as Timothy Weazle does

in the play, of a faithless guide and a horse that has proved a levanter.* He is, however, better off than the unfortunate attorney, for he has brought back the bridle. His narrative is confused—for the gilly to whose guidance he committed himself, seduced him into Meg Pringle's hostelrie, and divers mutchins were finished, and, unhappily, the mutchins finished him. Touching his travels homewards he preserves a dignified silence, and is, as I suspect, oblivious of the same. I fancy that he steered a circuitous course, he having, according to his own report, crossed sundry times the river, both mounted, and dismounted, whereas the beaten path does not impose the trouble of "taking soil" upon the tourist. He, the *hortus siccus* man, is obliged to be back at Falkirk in two days—and the bassoon-player has given him the pleasant intelligence that from the extent of the Lammermuir, two weeks may probably be consumed ere the erratic quadruped can be recovered. This afflicting

* "I have lost my guide, my guide has lost himself, and my horse has absconded with saddle, bridle, and shoes, save one he left behind him in a slough."—*The Wheel of Fortune*.

communication produced a burst of sorrow, in which it transpired that the ill-starred traveller was married—a man under authority—and his wife, what they call in America, “a *genuine commander*.” How will he venture into her presence, and stand “the fury of her eyes,” when she sees a personage who left home as well-mounted as John Gilpin when he started on his Edmonton expedition, return to Falkirk with a bridle in his hand, and an apocryphal apology for a lost charger? He is off “over bank, bush, and scaur,” on the chance, rather than in the hope of recovering his lost Rosinante—leaving behind him sundry weeds, a bunch of heather, an ill-constructed fishing-rod, and a book which he brought with him no doubt for a double purpose—namely, to indoctrinate him in “the gentle art,” and also render him an adept in the stable and field management of horse-flesh—for on both these subjects, the book in question, produced by Nicholas Cox, 1680, gives ample information.

Somebody says—no matter who—but a person whose word might be taken for a thousand, that he never met a book in his life from

which he could not extract some useful information—*probatum est*—and, although an old dragoon, I have learned from honest Nicholas more than I ever knew in my life before. Nick sayeth, “I have imparted to the public what my own experience hath taught me,” and, as in honour bound, I will oblige the said public with some valuable information.

Of course it is necessary, on Mrs. Glass’s principle for making hare soup, as a preliminary step to provide yourself with what the Irish term, “a daisy cutter.” In purchasing the prad, be sure he has plenty of white through him, whether he be black, bay, or sorrel. If he has not, old Nick passeth “his word” that he’ll be sulky as a bear, particularly if he have “a small pink eye, a narrow face, with a nose bending like a hawk’s bill.”

Touching dietary, Mr. Cox is very particular, and differs with a great authority, a Mr. Morgan. Nick does not object to “oats washt in strong ale,” but he won’t stand “bay salt and aniseeds” in the hay, nor “incourage his water with white wine to qualifie the cold quality thereof,” this being in equine management a

mere copy of the Irish gentleman's reason for throwing a glass of cognac into a tumbler of the simple element, not to improve the flavour, but only to "take the colour of death" off the innocuous fluid.

In stable management, the groom is desired to take the currycomb in his right hand, and if the horse let fly when under the operation, to "correct him gently for his waggishness." Devilish queer definition of waggery! The jerk direct of a horse's hind leg into your stomach is, in my mind, anything but a joke.

When preparing for the hunting season, which must be opened by running a trail of "a dead cat or a salt herring," at four o'clock in the morning you must give your "bone setter" a quarter of peck of oats and a quart of good strong ale," and on your return, "to disperse watry humours which might annoy his head," and also "to comfort his stomach" the malt must be administered again in a preparation called "horse caudle," and his legs bathed over from the knees with "warm beef broth." After his second appearance in the field you must change your caudle and beef

broth for an electuary of "butter, grommel-broom, parsley, jallap, aniseeds, liquorish, and cream of tartar, three handfuls of rye-bread, hay, provinder, mash, &c., and so leave him till morning." At the early visit next day, should he have what Nick calls "a pose in the head—" as there's nothing like leather, you must comfort his stomach anew, and administer strong ale with oats and mustard-seed.

This is all plain sailing, merely confined to ordinary field operations, but "the ordering the hunter for a match of plate" is a different job altogether, and the groom has other fish to fry.

After he takes an exact view of the state of his body, "both outwardly and inwardly—" the latter rather troublesome to accomplish—if the horse appear sluggish and melancholy, he must get "half an ounce of diapente in a pint of good old Malaga sack." Now were we ourselves melancholy, barring the diapente, we would not object to the sack-posset. Then he must be fed on bread, *vide* in the note the recipe for preparing it.* The dead cat

* "Take wheat-meal one peck, rye-meal, beans and oat-meal, all ground very small, of each half a peck, aniseeds, and liquorish, of each one ounce, white sugar-candy four ounces, all in fine powder, the yolks and

next comes into operation—and when he is tired of cantering after the deceased grimalkin, “find out a dead jog.” At first I took it for a misprint, and opined it was “a dead dog,” as forming a pleasing variety to cat hunting; but the context put me right—“or sandy way, though but of half a mile’s length, and there breath your horse.” At eight o’clock give him “a julep—” not a *mint one*, as Jonathan concocts it—but barley-water, lemon-juice, and violets. For the last fortnight wash his oats in whites of eggs, and on the morning that he runs give him “a toast or two steeped in sack;” lead him to the scratch—and you’re safe to win—“*et nullus error*”—as the Duke says.

Nicholas, though wide awake in all the arcana of foul play, such as “crossing, yoking, &c.,” desireth not to instruct any one in the same; but there is one artful dodge which he drops out—and that, Sam Chiffney, old as he is, should attend to.

“If there be any high wind stirring when

whites of twenty eggs, well beaten, and so much white wine as will knead it into a paste; make this into two great loaves, bake them well, and after they be two or three days old, let him eat of this bread, but chip away the outside.

you ride, observe, if it be in your face, to let your adversary lead, and to hold hard behind him, till you see your opportunity of giving a loose; yet you must observe to ride so close to him that his horse may break the wind from yours, and that you, by stooping low in your seat, may shelter yourself under him, which will assist the strength of your horse. But if the wind be in your back, ride exactly behind him, that your horse may alone enjoy the benefit of the wind, by being as it were blown forward, and by breaking it from him as much as possible."

Finis coronat. The race is over, and of course you have won to a dead moral. Well, lead your horse home and give him "this drink to comfort"—a pint and a half of sweet milk, three yolks of eggs, a handful of rosemary, three pennyworth of saffron, and three spoonsful of salad oil. Wash his back "with warm sack," the spurring-places with the same admixture that Zantippe applied to Socrates, his legs with ditto and saltpetre; and with the assistance of a mash, rye-bread, hay, corn, and an electuary, next morning you'll find him as fresh as a four-year-old.

CHAPTER XVIII.

To any one who, in the language of Cockayne, can stand "the cheap and nasty," a voyage from Leith to Berwick will be particularly interesting. It is effected in six hours—and time and space are annihilated for the moderate consideration of four shillings. As it is happily observed of the army, that "economy is the order of the day," if the voyager will content himself with that moiety of the deck which is placed before the funnel, and consort with sheep and navigators—not thereby meaning sailors, but "unkempt" Irishmen, who labour upon the railroads—he will effect the passage from Auld Reekie to the Border fortress at half price. From a former and cursory inspection of the Frith of Forth, I was anxious to view its lions at more leisure, and embarked myself and carpet-bag at 8 o'clock A.M., at Granton Pier,

having stipulated that I was to be landed, wind and weather permitting, at North Berwick. This latter stipulation on the part of the canny Scot who commanded the Border Maid, and who, by the way, looked more like a moss-trooper than a mariner—was altogether unnecessary, for there was not a cap-full of wind, and the water was smooth as a mill-dam.

Of the succession of interesting objects which the Firth presents to the passing tourists, a summary given by an old chronicler,* will convey a correct estimate.

“In the middle of Forth, upon a rock is the fortresse and decayed castle of Inchgarvy. By east lies, in the same water, St. Colm’s Inch, with a demolished Abbey, abundant with conies, and good pasturing for sheep. Next in the mid Firth, lyes Inchkeith, with a demolished fortressie, fertile of conies, and gud for pasturing sheep. East from Inchkeith, within Forth, lyes a verie high and big rock, invironed with the sea called the Basse, invincible, having upon the top a fresh spring; where the Solayne geese

* A True Description of the Whol Realme of Scotland, &c., &c.

repayre much, and are verie profitable to the owner of the said strength. Next the Basse, in the mouth of the Forth, lyes the Isle of May, a mile long and three quarters of a mile in breadth. There was a religious house, with many fresh water springs, with a fresh loch, abundant with eeles. This isle is a goodly refuge for saylers in time of tempest." The last of the lions is the Inchcape in "the Germane seas," with the usual account of the "Sea Pyrate, who stole the Abbot of Aleubrothick's bell or clocke," and the moral appended, that "a yeare after he perisht on the same rocke with shippe and goods, in the righteous judgment of God," and the chronicles might have added in the words of the Irish juryman, who accompanied his verdict of manslaughter with the brief but expressive remark, "and sarve him right, too."

To the antiquary there is no part of Scotland more extensive in memorials of "lang syne," than the coast we skirted. The imposing appearance of North Berwick Law, springing to a conical height of eight hundred feet from a circumjacent country perfectly level, is most remarkable. As we approached it, we passed

close to several rocky islets. On one of them there were a few rabbits, and another is stocked with a less valuable quadruped, and, as the fishermen assert, is almost alive with rats.

The signal from the steamer for a boat was promptly answered—and having duly covenanted that on his next transit down the Firth, I should re-embark in the *Border Maid*, I bade the commander a good passage, and was safely landed at the Royal Burgh.

For “learned fools,” I would conscientiously recommend North Berwick as head-quarters. They will be in reach of whole acres of ramparts and ditches—tumuli and encampments. They will see a hallowed spot, where “a medal of Trajan, a fibula, a patera, and a horn of a moose deer,” were discovered. In short, there is no place in the land of cakes, where they can puzzle themselves with more ease, and bore the remainder of mankind afterwards with the result of their conjectures.

To me, the castle of Tantallon has a military, and Scott has conferred upon it, a poetic interest. Even in its ruins, one can well imagine its primitive importance. Encompassed on three sides by the sea, the land face, in former days,

could have been its only vulnerable point, and the traces of a double ditch, and a high ground, on which field defences may still be traced, shews that it was, as far as the engineering knowledge of the times went, fortified with care and skill. After a stormy history, during which it stood out for a long time against the fifth James, it was fated to falsify the proverb; for in 1639, it was regularly "ding-down'd" * by the Covenanters, and left the ruin that it now remains.

I am occasionally one of those dreamy individuals who wander back to "auld lang syne," and as I sate on a fallen buttress, I looked at the *fosse* before the gateway which the draw-bridge had once spanned, and fancied that I saw Marmion "cutting his stick," and old "Bell-the-Cat" shouting "stop thief," after him. But the feeling of the ridiculous passed away—a chirping at my elbow caused me to turn round—a red-pole was my companion, and probably the sole tenant of Tantallon—occupant of walls which had once held the power of a king in

* "Ding-down Tantallon—mak a brig to the Bass," meaning that one event was as possible as the other.

check, and the "place of pride" of one of the most daring and unscrupulous nobles of his day, the fierce Lord Archibald. I looked at the little representative of the Douglas, and muttered a "*sic transit* !"

; Of monastic ruins there are in the neighbourhood an exuberant supply—and west of North Berwick are the remains of the church of Gul-lane. The ruins, though extensive, would not probably interest the traveller, but for the fate of the last Vicar. Did the same authority exist now, how many bishops, priests, and deacons would be placed in jeopardy. This ill-used churchman was deposed by James the Sixth, his only crime an alleged partiality for tobacco!

Another ruin nearer the town, exhibits some broken walls and spacious vaults, and was formerly a nunnery—and a better fed community could not have been found in Britain. In 1562, their rental and rations comprised £556 17s. 8d. in hard cash, with nine chalders of wheat, nineteen of bear, fourteen of oats, three chalders of peas and beans, two of malt, eighteen oxen, two cows; and for Lent and fast days, one last, and nine barrels of salmon! Had I been living then, and permitted right of election touching

residence between old Bell-the-Cat and my Lady Abbess, I would have declared for her reverence—and no mistake!

Having made arrangements with the tacksmen of the Bass, who rents the rock from the proprietor, one of the Dalrymple family I believe*—I started before daylight for the islet. Its general description is easily given. It is about a mile from the shore, and only accessible by the land-side; this passage being formerly well defended, and at present secured from intrusion by a door, which after his daily visit, the tenant secures by turning the key, and literally locking up the island. Near the top of the rock there is good fresh water, and pasturage for a score of sheep. The qualities of the Bass are not only fattening, but as it is asserted, it gives the mutton a wild and most delicate flavour. It is rented by a butcher in Edinburgh, and as my informant deposed, “tho’ it’s no large enough to graze thirty, it’s excuse enough to sell three hundred!” meaning thereby, that this iniquitous flesher palms upon the credulous,

* In 1706, Sir Hugh Dalrymple got the island a bargain—price, a penny Scotch!

sheep which had led an innocent and retired existence among the Cheviots, and never had seen what old Drummond calls the "Solan-goosifera Bassa" in their lives. Indeed, the longer one sojourns in the world, he finds that to the artifice of "villanous man" there is no bounds.

The rock originally belonged to the Lauder family, who, as it is stated, refused divers sporting offers for it from the Scottish Kings. Charles the Second, as George Robins would say, at last became the "fortunate possessor," and he kept it as a place of strength; his brother James afterwards converting it into a prison for State offenders. Judging from the extent of the existing ruins, the unfortunate *détenu* had but limited accommodation; although, like Justice Shallow's estate, there was there no scarcity of good air. In 1702, King William issued his "delenda," and, as a stronghold, the Bass was demolished.

It is marvellous what mutations in this world men and things have undergone. On the Bass, originally, there was a monastic establishment, which migrated across the Frith to May Island,

either for the sake of more room, or fresh eels—a valuable article in lent. Then it became a place of strength, next a prison, and last, strange scene in its eventful history, a robber-haunt.

“After the Revolution, a desperate banditti got possession of it, and by means of a large boat, which they hoisted up and down the rock at pleasure, committed several robberies on shore, and took a number of vessels at sea. They held it, the last place in Scotland for James; but having at last lost their boat, and not receiving their usual supply of provisions from France, they were obliged to surrender.”*

As the season when the Solan geese are fit for taking had commenced, and the tenant of the Bass had an extensive order to execute for the Edinburgh market, I had an opportunity of seeing the short and simple process by which the birds are killed. Some men ascended the rock, while the boat, in which I remained, pulled round, and lay upon its oars at the base of the tremendous precipices which

* History of North Berwick.

beetle over the sea. Presently, a man was lowered by a rope over the ridge above, and with a short stick, commenced knocking on the head such young gannets as he considered sufficiently grown. The devoted birds fell from



KILLING SOLAN GEESE.

the rock by dozens, and it was our business, as they flopped heavily on the water, to pick them up. It was a strange and exciting scene. The frowning cliff which overhung us, was studded with innumerable snowy specks; for though a myriad of geese were wheeling round and

round upon the wing, as many more remained upon the eggs, or as if they wished to afford protection to their young ones—while a figure, that bore no very distant similitude to the black doll which dangles over the door of a London rag-shop, was seen hanging between sky and sea, his whole dependance a few strands of hemp, which, if chafed by the face of the rock, would instantaneously consign this wholesale murderer to Pandemonium.

After a sufficient supply of young solans had been obtained, and I had visited the summit of the Bass, we rowed round the rock before we returned ashore. It appears to be a divided kingdom—for one face of the Bass is occupied by Solan geese, and the other exclusively tenanted with gulls, here termed kittiewakes. At a point below, which seemed to bound the feathery empire, the boat lay to, and a swivel was discharged. None save those who have witnessed, could have imagined the effect. By hundreds—thousands—birds flew screaming from the precipice, until more were on the wing than human computation could amount to. For a mile round, the sky was half-obscured, and a shower of thick, flaky snow, would convey the

best idea of the dense masses and white plumage of the startled occupants of the Bass.

The Solan goose produces a triple revenue. The first operation he undergoes, like a raw youth upon town, is plucking. Next, he suffers the penalty of high treason, and is disembowelled. A quantity of unctuous matter, varying from the size of a pigeon's egg to a man's hand, is thus procured; and when melted, it is available for all the coarser purposes for which tallow is used, such as the greasing of carriage wheels and machinery. The last process consists in preparing the bird for market; and there, as it would appear, the Solan goose meets with a steady demand, the North Berwick price being on an average about nine-pence.

I was once obtested and implored by a brother officer, with whom I had spent the autumn in garrison at Athlone,* never to sit in the dark

* The quantity of eels taken in the Shannon is incredible. They are said to be the finest in Europe. The lower classes in the town live upon them during the time the fishery lasts, and at the dinner hour of the working people, the smell of broiling eels which pervades the dirty suburbs, conveys any sensation to the nose excepting that of Araby the blest.

with a man who could eat an eel ; as, according to his opinion, he, the eel-eater, was capable of committing any crime. Now in my sober judgment, and reckless of what any baillie or town-counsellor in Auld Reekie may say : I hold the cannibal who devours a Solan goose to be doubly dangerous. On my return in the steamer, one of these monsters was on board, and he assured me that he infinitely preferred a gannet to a stubble-geese ! From his own admission, the Solan has a most potent and offensive smell, both in culinary preparation, and when brought to table. In the second place, he informed me, that though enough of unctuous matter to grease a cart-wheel, had been previously extracted, it was necessary, when roasting, to puncture the bird's carcass to allow the interior supply of oil to exude. In the last place, he mentioned as a gastronomic recommendation, the fact, that a roasted Solan had the flavour of a fresh herring. This assertion was a settler, and I registered a vow in heaven never to hold communion with man or woman, to whom a solitary slice of a gannet could be traced.

Of all the gull tribe, the Solan goose is the most beautiful ; and nothing can be more elegant

than their gyrations in the air, before they make their arrowy dart to seize the prey, which, in the most turbulent sea, their unerring power of vision enables them to discover. I am told that in the Western Isles, this rare property of the bird is made subservient to its own destruction. A small fish or two are fastened to a flat board, which is left floating on the sea where the Solan geese are busy fishing. The gannet sees his prey, and makes his headlong stoop, and by a collision he does not calculate upon, he commits a sort of *felo de se*; or rather, is murdered under false pretences.

At the appointed time, and faithful to his engagement, the skipper of the Border Maid picked me up, and we returned to Berwick. The day was fine, and as the only literary resources on board were confined to an obsolete newspaper, I employed my time in taking a practical lesson in the culinary art, by watching the progress of the cabin dinner. The style of cooking pursued by the youth who presided over the steamer's galley was truly primitive, and was also in happy keeping with his *batterie de cuisine*, which consisted of a frying-pan and a

tin saucepan. Forks or forceps he had none, save those that nature had supplied him with.

The dinner, whose preparation I viewed with so much interest, was simple but nutritious, and consisted of fried codlings and mutton chops. When the potatoes were boiled, on went the frying-pan, and the fish were popped into it, and when they were satisfactorily prepared, the mutton followed; and while it hissed upon the pan, the youth, who seemed to unite considerable taste with cleanliness and comfort, turned the codlings up and down with his fingers, to ascertain in what position on the dish they would present the most insinuating attitude to the cabin passengers. All being prepared, he proceeded to spread the festive board. "The fish and praties," as they say in Ireland, reached their destination safely; but the chops were not so fortunate. In their transit to the cabin, the *artiste* who had cooked them stumbled over a dog, and the cutlets kissed the deck. But he seemed a lad of happy temper, and replaced them on the dish without murmur or delay; while, as I presume, they had lost nothing by the fall. I being a man of vulgar prejudice, disliking "flesh

fishified," almost as much as I abhorred a Solan goose, declined the Captain's invitation, and waited patiently my arrival in Berwick for a salmon cutlet at the King's arms.

I believe no traveller of pretension can commence a tour now without his *batterie* and cook—and, as I have been informed, the one is very heavy, and the other devilish troublesome. Before any Duke, Marquis, or Viscount sets out to effect a voyage by steam or canvass, and afterwards determines to adorn the literature of the age with a full, true, and particular narrative of the same, were the noble lord counselled by me, he would make one transit in the Border Maid from Leith to Berwick. There will he learn what may be effected with one tin saucepan and a frying-pan, and be practically convinced that there is truth in the old adage, that "fingers are before forks."

CHAPTER XIX.

THE best day's fishing I have had yet, was in walking from Elmford to Matty Pringles. I have often caught more in weight, and more in number twice-told ; but the sprats which generally torment you seem to have been otherwise engaged, and nothing looked at the fly but a trout of some respectability. I wonder am I singular in taste ; for barring the trash cooked for cocknies at Greenwich, and whose flavour is entirely factitious—there is not in my opinion a more tasteless thing on earth than a plainly-dressed burn-trout. Meg has brought me a couple, but I repudiated them for her rashers and new laid eggs—and two tumblers of toddy discussed, I am ready for the road. Five miles' walking will bring me to Grant's house—and a

beautiful walk it is on a beautiful evening like the present one. At six I reached the railroad station—and in forty or fifty minutes arrived at Berwick, a distance, that would have consumed the best part of a morning a few years since.

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Bound for Northumberland! and after a few days' sojourn here, I have bade a temporary farewell to the ancient and loyal town of Berwick, and crossed the "debateable land," *en route* to that sweet range of hills, which the proud Percy hunted in "lang syne," and where Widdrington—could faith be put in ballads—fought upon his stumps. My destination is the little quiet town of Wooler, which lies at the bottom of the Cheviots—and I have reached it at noon, after a drive that would half unsettle the understanding of any Border antiquary who visited it for the first time. The memorials of the past are frequent and well preserved, and seem left like so many landmarks, to direct the traveller's attention to the romance of days gone by.

One of the largest ruins of a Border tower is passed at Duddo. These ancient buildings

are becoming rare—for most of the ancient peel-houses have been razed to the foundations to furnish materials for more peaceful and profitable erections, and their “coins of vantage” will now be found in neighbouring farm-steadings. The peel-house of Duddo stands on a rocky know—and ere it became roofless and half-dismantled, commanded a bold view of the country for miles around. From its position being in advance of the more important castles of Etal and Ford, it might have been designed as well for a look-out tower, as a house of defence, in order to give notice to the garrisons of these places, that the unruly Borderers on the Scottish side were once more in the saddle ; and telegraph by the signal-fires then in use, whether the invasion were but a predatory foray, or, on the more extended scale of operations termed “a warden-raid.”

Etal is the Northumbrian Auburn, and no sweeter village was ever resorted to wherein to pass a honeymoon. The ruined castle is very picturesque, and from its close proximity to the village, one can imagine what was at those times generally the case, that the humbler of

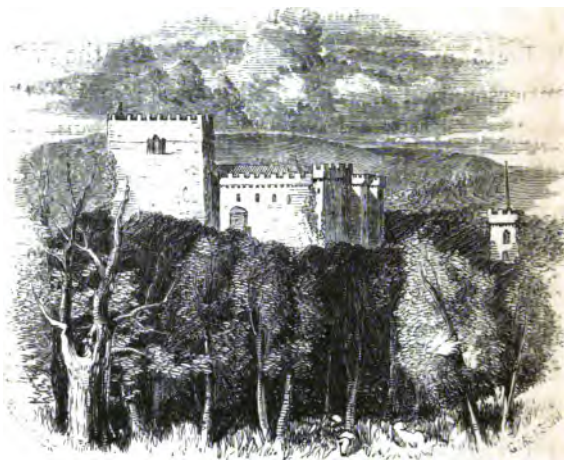
the body politic three or four centuries ago, sheltered themselves beneath its walls for security. Etal looks now with its trellised cottages and blooming flower-knots, the very impersonation of quiet and repose ; and if the banks of the river are not delighted with the melody of "the shepherd's reed"—an instrument I never heard, or any body else, I fancy—they certainly are not "startled by the bugle-horn ;" and Scott's line might be equally applied to Till as Teviot—

"All, all is peaceful—all is still."

In August, 1513, when James IV. invaded England, he reduced Wark and Etal, and then occupied Ford Castle, which he made headquarters. Here he played Marc Antony with Lady Heron—and instead of pushing his opening success, allowed the English to cross the Till without opposition—about as great a military blunder as Marmont committed at Salamanca by extending his left ; and Wellington, in investing Burgos without artillery.

Ford Castle has completely changed its character from a place of strength, and is now a mere baronial residence. It is, however,

a fine relict of days gone by ; and from past associations, with a little imagination, a dreamer



FORD CASTLE.

like myself may people it with “lords of high emprise,” and high-born beauties—fancy that in this room of state he sees the amorous monarch enjoying a sober *tête-à-tête* with the “witching dame”—while in the next lobby, the Archbishop of St. Andrew’s, according to Hollingshed, “a youth of promis,” is romping with her daughter.*

* The Archbishop, a natural son of the fourth James, is said to have been as much fascinated with Miss Ford, as the King was with her mother.

Ford Castle is one of the oldest strongholds in the debateable land. It was built in 1287, by Sir William Heron, but totally reconstructed in 1761, by Sir John Delaval, with the exception of the old flanking towers, on the east and west. Besides the very beautiful scenery of the valley of Wooller, Ford commands to the westward, and at the distance of a mile and a half, a fine view of Flodden.

This memorable field of battle is a hill near the village of Branxton, and one of the lowest of those swelling grounds, which gradually decline from the higher ranges of the Cheviots in a north-easterly direction to the Tweed. As we do not intend to describe a battle so frequently detailed before, and so well preserved in historic recollection, it is sufficient to say that the position the Scottish King had chosen possessed great military advantages, which, unfortunately for himself and his country, were stupidly neglected. If the sad tissue of mistakes he committed did not originate in mistaken judgment, and not advisedly, as has been imputed to him, James should have exchanged his iron belt for a straight-waistcoat. Never

did a Scottish army join battle with greater prospect of success; and had the amorous monarch been a General, as Scott sings,

“ Flodden had been Bannockburn.”

It is hard to find apology for the royal folly which plunged a kingdom into mourning;—and to his dallying time away at Ford and making false movements as he did at Flodden, no term of contempt can be strong enough. The manliness of his death however, half redeems his previous offendings—and had he been half so energetic in his efforts to ensure victory, as he was desperate in the vain hope of restoring “a lost battle,” the wail that every lowland valley and highland strath re-echoed, would have been heard from Tweed to Thames.

“When the field turned decidedly against him,” says McKenzie, “James, whose bravery kindled to an extravagance of courage at the perils which seemed now to surround him; deaf to every advice and remonstrance pressed forward, and exposed his royal person to all the dangers of the field. Being sustained by Bothwell and the reserve, he charged on foot, at the

head of the best of his troops, whose armour had resisted the arrows of the English ; pressing forward to the standard of the Earl of Surrey, and with such ardour and valour, that they were nearly gained by the heroic phalanx. But, at length, the wings of the Scottish army being totally routed, all the English forces were directed against the centre, which was now totally surrounded by the coming in of Lord Dacre in the rear.”*

We stopped at Wooler. The inn excellent, and standing a short distance below the town, through which the coaches do not pass. There is a wedding party in the house, and they have gone out to breathe a little air after dinner, and passed our window. The bride is very pretty, and seems to be in excellent spirits ; the bridegroom might be the lady's father, and seems dolorous, as if he had been Provisional Director, in the Great Swindlesex Grand Junction. Has the unhappy man, too late, seen the error of his choice, and discovered that a man of fifty-five, in marrying a girl rising twenty, proves himself an ass ? Well, go thy way ! I have no sym-

* History of Northumberland.

pathy for old fools, whatever I may feel for young ones!

When that agreeable practitioner, Dr. Ollapod, is philandering to Miss Lucretia Mac Tab, and pointing out the beauties of the country and its local distinctions, to a question put to the lady as to what might particularly distinguish "sweet Surrey," he modestly observes that the principal lion of the neighbourhood was his "Cousin Crushjaw, of Casehorton, who lugged out a tooth without the slightest inconvenience to the patient; but I have neither heard or seen aught to distinguish Wooler from other market towns, not even a dentist—and we left next morning, *en route* to even a duller place, but with a population more active and enterprising, as is the case invariably, when sea-coast villages are compared with inland towns. A successful night's herring-fishery had put the little town of North Sunderland in a bustle; men, women, and children were actively engaged, and

"Louder still the clamour grew,"

as several boats landed from the French vessels

anchored off the pier to traffic as they do annually with the inhabitants who are exclusively employed in the varied fisheries this coast affords. My companion pointed out at the entrance of the village what appeared to me a singular object,—a new house, and that in ruins.

“That,” he said, “was the residence of the notorious Belany.”

The *morale* of Northumberland is respectable ; crime rarely occurs, I mean offences of the graver character, such as involve capital or transportable penalties ; and with the exception of paltry assaults, and other drunken delinquencies—which may always be expected to occur among a population engaged in fishing—few cases are brought before the local authorities. One personage, however—it might be not libellous to call a man criminal, whom a London jury pronounced guiltless—recently conferred upon this place a felonious notoriety ; but in common justice to this retired sea-port, we must remark that the gentleman was not a native—and as ould Ireland presented Auld Reekie with Mr. Hare—Scotland, as a mark

of gratitude for the compliment, favoured North Sunderland with Mr. Belany.

After having been tried and acquitted—in the pride of his innocence, he sought the “*domus*”, although the “*placens uxor*” was wanting. No ovation awaited him; for most perversely and irreverently differing from a learned Judge, and an enlightened jury, the North Sunderland fishermen heretically dissenting, on the evening of his arrival, hanged their distinguished townsman in effigy before his own door. Boys who play much at soldiers, generally at manhood enlist. If the suspension of a scarecrow, topped with a likeness of a celebrated individual cut in turnip, had been so much admired, surely the strapping up of the real Simon Pure, would be infinitely more imposing. To hang Mr. Belany in person, was therefore unanimously resolved upon; and the next evening, the whole “*posse committatus*” of the town, with a regular apparatus, repaired to the abiding place of the doomed one.

Mr. Belany, however, declined the intended honour; and levanting through the back-door, escaped strangulation for “the nonce.” Irritated

at losing time in rigging a gallows, for which a tenant was not procurable, the Northumbrians turned their fury on the house, and left it the ruin that it stands.

I have been indoctrinated in Conservative principles, and hold Britain to be the land of justice; but still, on legal points, the climate is not more influenced by locality. In one county, poor John Tawell was hanged—a man whose calamitous case, drew tears from an Ex-Attorney-General—in the metropolis, Mr. Belany was acquitted. Now as every tale has, or should have its moral, I would recommend any gentleman who gets into trouble *honourably*, to appeal to a Galway jury, and he will be acquitted without a retirement from the box. If a tender husband administers a narcotic over strong, let him pin his faith on an English judge, and cockney panel. Go a step farther, and shoot a man in the public street—phoo! there's balm in Gilead for you still—call in a couple of mad-doctors, and off you come clean as a whistle.

Touching Mr. Belany's subsequent history and adventures, nothing, I believe, is known

correctly. Some say that he has been gathered to his fathers, and others that he has migrated to the continent. I am a traveller by land and by water, and all I shall add will be a word of friendly advice. Should the gentleman ever by accident be my fellow-passenger, and a cap-full of wind afford a decent apology for an expiatory sacrifice—by Saint Patrick! I shall not be slow in finding a Jonas for “the nonce”—and overboard he goes!

END OF VOL. I.

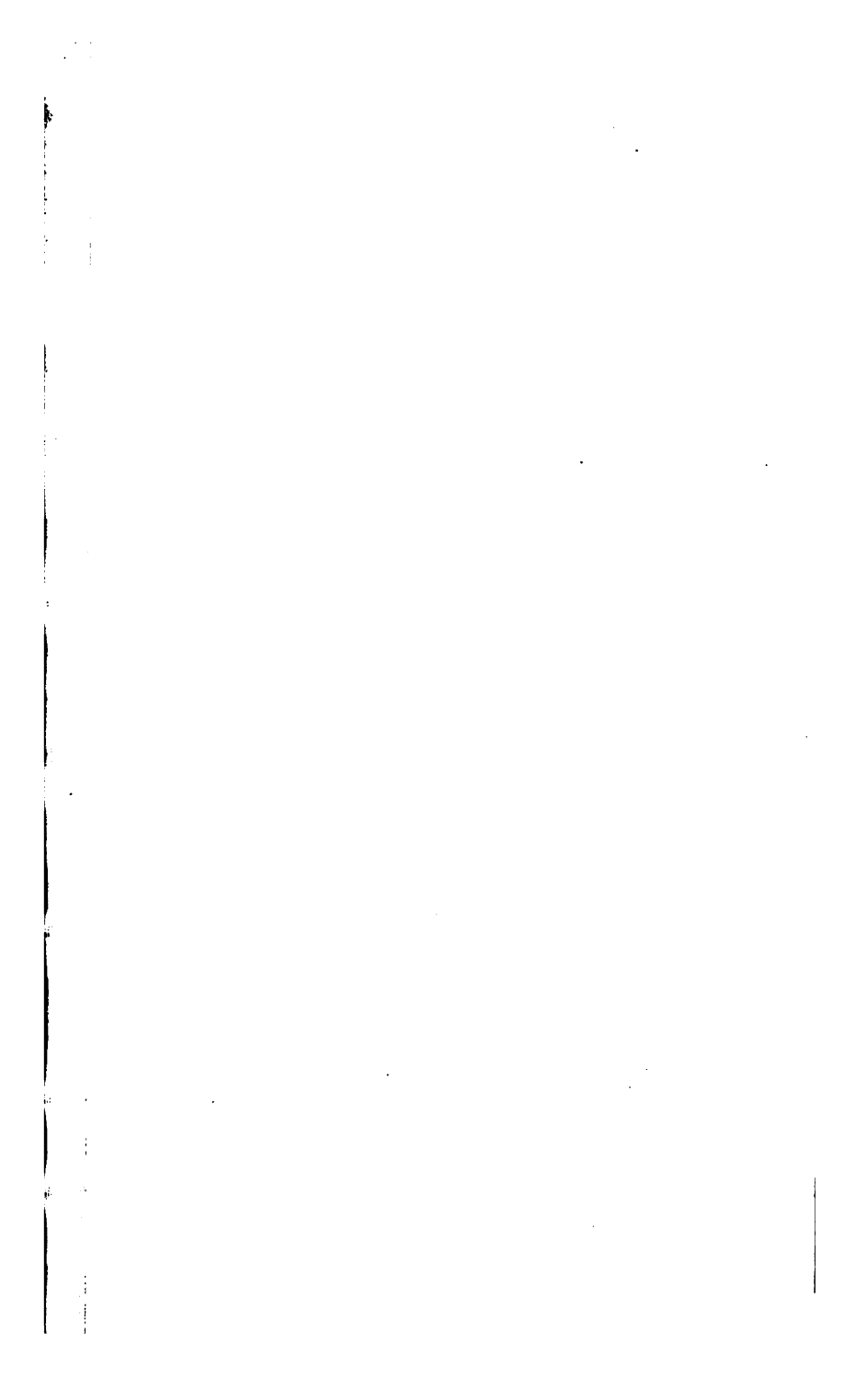
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